



OF GREAT TV CREATIVE

REPORT

How to Craft
Remarkable Work that
Works Remarkably

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Executive Summary

Purpose

To identify how marketers can develop more effective TV creative by embracing new technology and addressing shifting consumer behaviors—while maintaining proven principles that drive both brand and sales results.

The Problem

TV is still marketing’s heavyweight champion. But too many advertisers are stepping into the ring with outdated moves, resulting in creative that fails to capture attention or drive response.

The Solution

Marketers can improve their TV creative’s effectiveness by:

- 1 Grounding creative development in audience research and clear **strategic vision**.
- 2 Using **pretesting** to predict performance before spending on production.
- 3 Adapting to modern viewing habits with attention-grabbing **storytelling**.
- 4 Using **AI and emerging technologies** to enhance (not replace) human creativity.

Evidence

- ✓ For TV advertising, creative drives [37% of sales lift](#). So it’s worth spending extra time getting it right with a clear strategy.
- ✓ Marketers only accurately predict creative performance [52% of the time](#), making creative testing a must.
- ✓ 47% of TV advertisements in the US produce [feelings of neutrality](#), leaving the door open for emotive creative to stand out.
- ✓ The future of creative production is already here. [61% of ad agencies](#) now use generative AI in their work.

THE NEW RULES OF GREAT TV CREATIVE

**DEAR TRADITIONAL FORMULAS,
IT'S NOT US... IT'S YOU.**

THE OLD TV CREATIVE RULES

Dear traditional formulas, it's not us... it's you.

You're in a New York conference room. Executives in sharp suits pitch creative concepts straight from their "gut" over a polished mahogany table. Someone suggests a focus group, but they're quickly dismissed. It's a scene straight from *Mad Men*, and surprisingly, it's not that far from how many brands and agencies still develop TV commercials today.

For decades, TV creative development followed the same comfortable formulas. Write a clever tagline. Add a celebrity if budget allows. Maybe test with focus groups. And for decades, this approach produced some pretty memorable work.

But it's not enough anymore.



While TV creative practices have stayed eerily similar over the years, everything else has changed. Today's TV viewing experience bears little resemblance to that of even a decade ago. Nielsen reports that [88% of TV viewers](#) now watch with a second device in hand. They're checking emails during commercial breaks or shopping while streaming their favorite show. And with [32,200 linear channels](#) and 89 streaming video sources available in the US, viewers are skilled at tuning out anything that doesn't immediately grab their attention.

Traditional approaches to TV creative are also expensive. You may think bigger budget equals bigger impact. But I've seen brands spend millions producing, then in-market testing, multiple commercials, only to discover that none of them worked. Others have created beautiful brand pieces that fail to drive any measurable business impact.

These individual cases point to a broader industry challenge. According to Peter Field and the IPA, there's been a [concerning decline](#) in the effectiveness of creatively awarded campaigns over the last couple of decades. And the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute reports that only [12% of agency clients](#) feel confident convincing their CFO to invest in high-quality creative. Some industry commentators have gone so far as to suggest we're facing a creativity crisis.

The declining effectiveness of creativity campaigns

Creatively awarded campaigns have grown less effective over the last couple of decades.



IPA

Across all channels, creative claims the greatest gap between the role marketers believe it plays in driving sales and how much it actually does. Its [sales effect was 2.5 times greater](#) than advertisers perceived it to be in a 2023 study from NCSolutions and Advertiser Perceptions. For TV advertising specifically, creative drives [37% of sales lift](#).

So it's worth getting right.

At Marketing Architects, we've spent more than twenty-five years challenging TV's traditional formulas. And we invest millions in our clients' creative development annually—we've invested nearly \$50 million in clients' production costs alone—so we're highly motivated to know what works. We've analyzed thousands of commercial pretests, compared countless in-market creative results, and devoured research from organizations like WARC, the IPA, and the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute to inform testing and validate findings.

What we've discovered is that remarkable TV creative requires a different playbook than the one that's been used for decades. One that combines proven creative principles with new technologies. That respects both the art and science of advertising. And most importantly, that's built for how people watch TV in 2025 and beyond.

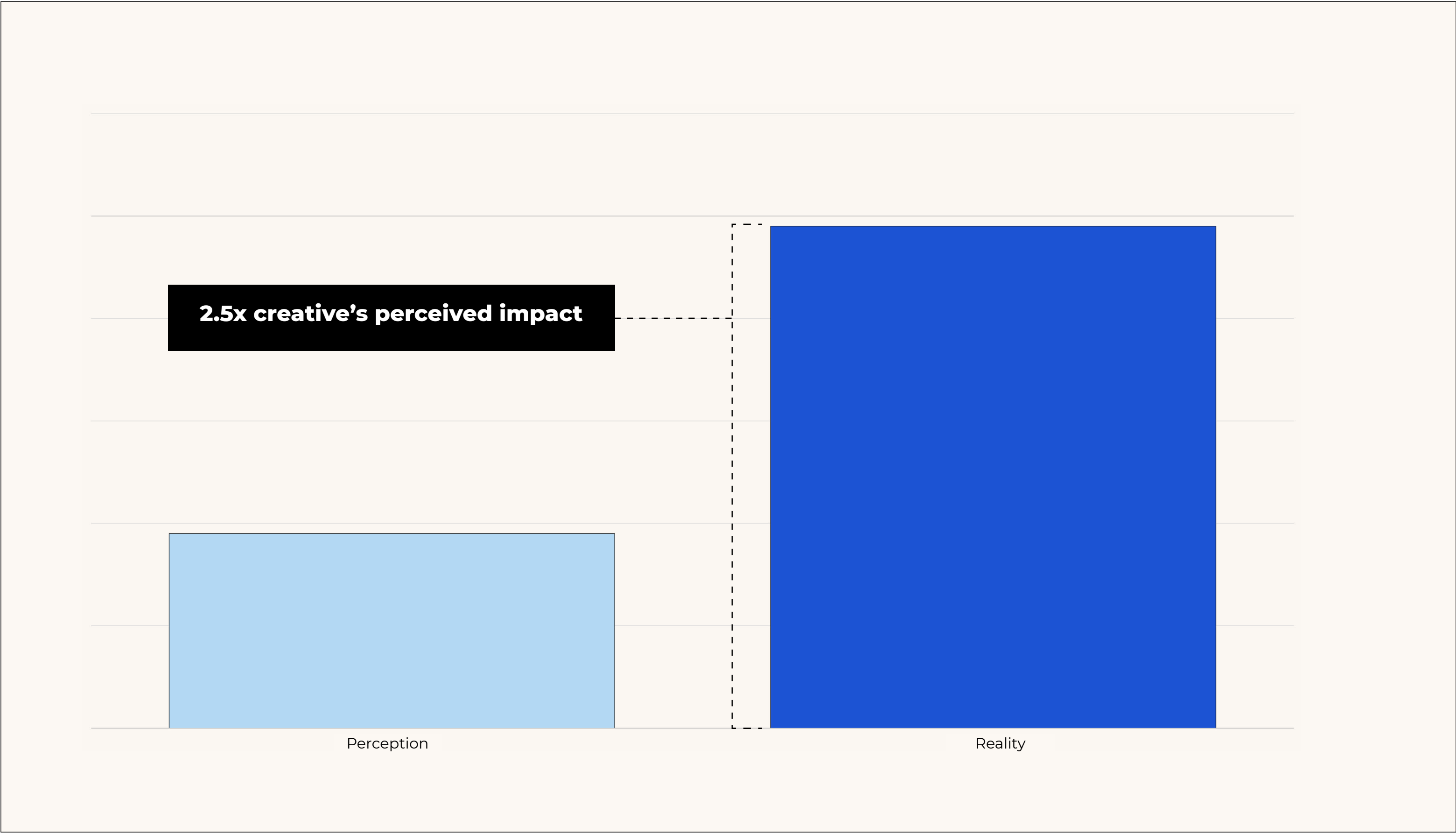
In this report, we're sharing what that playbook looks like. The rules for great TV creative have changed. It's time your creative approach did too.



Angela Voss, CEO at Marketing Architects

Creative as a sales driver

Creative's impact on sales is greater than most marketers think.



NCSolutions and Advertiser Perceptions

OLD RULE

NO TRESPASSING

Traditional methods lean so heavily on flashy creative that it leaves no room to step into the consumer's world.

NEW RULE #1

TRESPASSERS WELCOME

Go undercover into the mind of your consumer. The best creative starts with understanding your audience.



NEW RULE #1

Trespassers welcome

“Start with understanding the one thing no one else in the company understands, **the consumer**.”

—[Mark Ritson](#), brand consultant and marketing professor

Modern consumers are bombarded with hundreds of marketing messages daily. As a result, we’ve developed sophisticated filters to ignore irrelevant content. This means your ad has seconds to prove to the viewer why it deserves their attention. And without an intentional strategy for achieving relevance and engagement, even the most star-studded, beautifully produced commercial can flop.

The most obvious examples come from the biggest advertising event each year—the Super Bowl. In 2025, a 30-second spot cost [\\$8 million](#) for the media alone. And expenses don’t stop there. Brands pulled out all the stops for creative, too.

But a big budget far from guarantees a positive ROI. [iSpot reported](#) that the Meta and Ray-Ban spot “[Hey Meta, Who Eats Art?](#)” produced a strong feeling of dislike, despite featuring celebrities Chris Hemsworth,

Chris Pratt, and Kris Jenner. It also only had 41% brand recognition. That’s surprisingly low for two well-established companies.

But Meta and Ray-Ban are far from the only brands to produce expensive Super Bowl ads that face underwhelming response. Household names like Budweiser, Planters, and Audi have all found themselves on lists of the [worst Super Bowl ads](#) in recent history.

What goes wrong in these cases? We can’t know the behind-the-scenes of each spot, but we do know the easiest place to get off track when developing TV creative is long before a single word of a script is written. The success or failure of any TV campaign begins with strategy.



Ask questions, never assume.

The most effective TV commercials are rarely born from a ‘Eureka’ moment of creative enlightenment. Instead, they’re developed through research and the asking of a few key questions.

1. Who is your audience? Not just their demographics, but their attitudes, behaviors, and pain points. What are they struggling with that your product or service can solve?
2. What do they think of you? Do consumers trust your brand? Are you seen as innovative or traditional? Premium or value-driven? How does your brand compare to that of your competitors? These perceptions shape how viewers interpret and respond to your message.
3. What are you trying to get them to do? Are you primarily focused on driving new customer acquisition? Building awareness? Increasing market share? Different goals lead to different creative strategies and clear focus will help you prioritize which creative directions to pursue.

Craft your creative brief.

Once you’ve asked these questions, it’s time to get answers. Real, data-backed answers, not who you ‘think’ your audience is, but who they tell you they are through their words and behaviors.

The easiest place to start is usually by looking for trends among your current customers. What patterns emerge in their buying behavior? Which marketing messages drove them to act? What feedback do they provide about your brand?

Next, validate internal findings with third-party research. Sources like MRI-Simmons can provide valuable context about your category and audience. Finally, first-party research through a brand study can uncover opportunities and threats straight from your target audience and a competitive analysis ensures you’re building where there’s white space in your category.

Only then is it time to build your creative brief. There’s a reason why BBH co-founder John Hegarty [called creative briefs](#) the “first ad in the campaign.” There’s an art to producing a great brief, one that can inspire creative teams while providing clear strategic guidance. And without a deep customer understanding informing creative decisions, you’re just adding to the noise in your audience’s already ad-inundated day.



OLD RULE

NO ROUGH PLAY

When choosing creative concepts, traditional methods favor gut instinct over rigorous elimination.

NEW RULE #2

PLAY ROUGH

Let ideas battle it out. Creative pretesting finds the champion before you invest.



NEW RULE #2

Play rough

“I look at an ad or commercial, all too many of the commercials in fact, and I say **that is just an incompetent piece of work**. The guy doesn’t know what he is doing.”

—[David Ogilvy](#), founder of Ogilvy & Mather

How good are marketers at predicting which ads will perform best?

Creative automation platform Marpipe decided to find out. They placed multiple sets of two digital ads in front of 750 marketing professionals and asked them to [predict which performed better](#). The result? Marketers accurately predicted performance a whopping... 52% of the time.

You might as well flip a coin.

This is why picking creative based on ‘your gut’ isn’t a great idea. Our ‘gut’ is often wrong.



Digital advertisers solve this problem with [A/B testing](#). With this approach, you don't need to guess which ad will perform better. You can simply put a small budget behind presenting a segment of your audience with two, three, or a dozen ad variations and find out exactly what they think.

But the cost of A/B testing digital ads is miniscule compared to testing multiple TV spots in-market. That can quickly run up millions in media costs for advertisers, not to mention the cost of fully producing multiple commercials that may not work or that need significant optimization.

So the smartest TV advertisers have turned to pretesting.

The origins of TV pretesting.

One early form of TV pretesting, copytesting first came into style in the 1960s when agencies needed a way to validate creative decisions before spending significant money on production and media. The process evaluates the effectiveness of creative executions during pre-production, when ad concepts are in animatic or photomatic form.

Over the last fifty years, copytesting has evolved alongside technology, psychology, and advertising best practices. Recent developments in neuroscience have even allowed advertisers to test metrics like attention and emotional response. Today, our online connectedness lets copytesting take place digitally, so advertisers can reach audience members across larger geographic areas and not worry about the logistics or expense of bringing everyone together for an in-person focus group.

But copytesting also has its challenges. Critics claim it limits creativity by forcing a prescriptive process and fragmenting storytelling. Animatics still require time and money to develop, even if they're not as hefty an investment as fully-produced spots. And while it's certainly more efficient than organizing a focus group, testing can still take weeks and cost brands thousands.

Then AI entered the scene, and pretesting possibilities changed yet again.

Meet synthetic audiences.

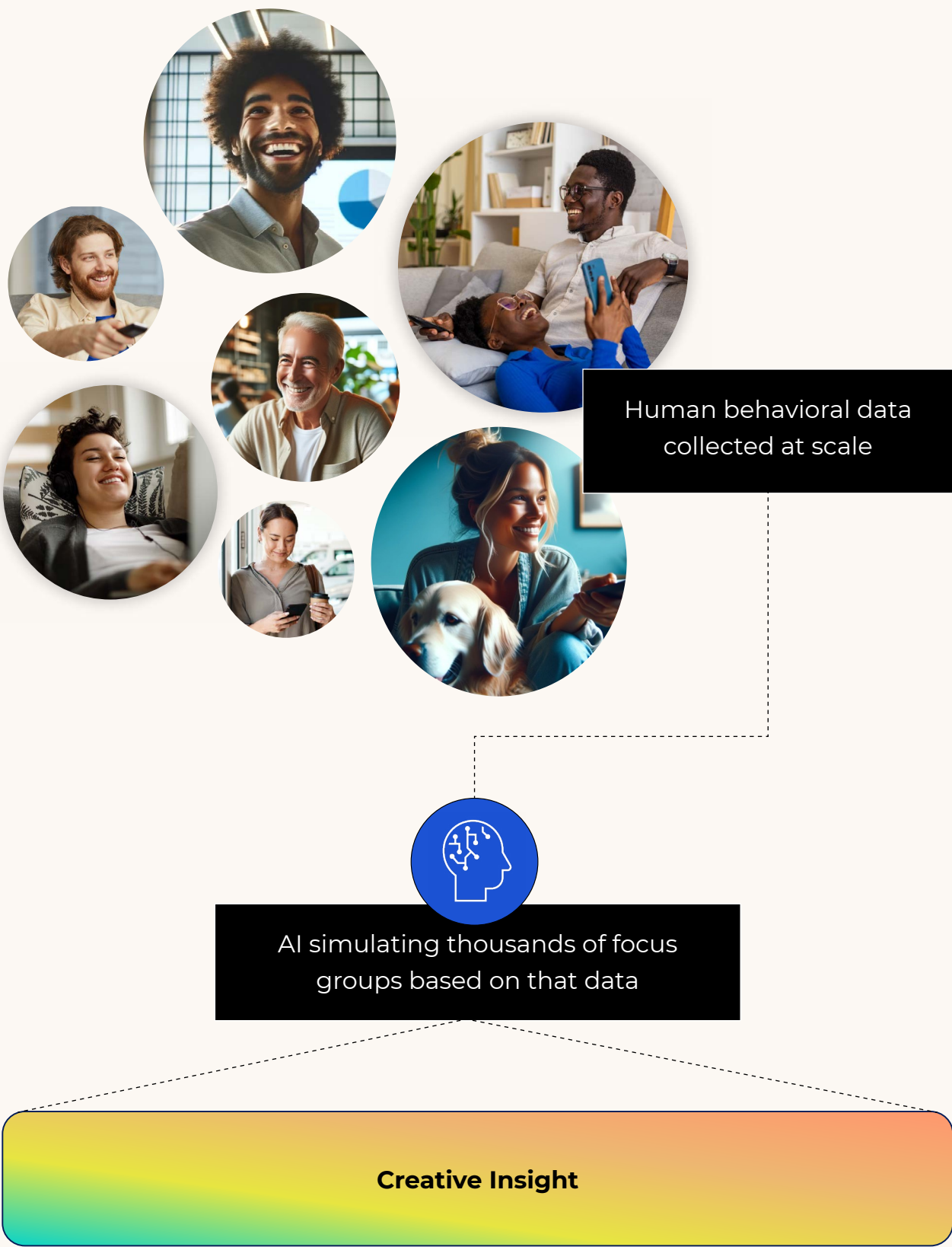
Synthetic audiences are AI-generated groups that simulate real consumer behavior using aggregated data and natural language processing. Unlike traditional focus groups limited to smaller samples providing qualitative feedback, synthetic audiences offer rapid quantitative insights.

But how accurate are they, really?



How ‘human’ are synthetic audiences?

Synthetic audiences are built on the aggregation of real human behavioral data collected at scale.



In 2023, studies found agreement rates between human- and LLM-generated [datasets reached over 75%](#). But AI’s advanced significantly since then.

More recently, digital design and engineering studio Siberia partnered with Synthetic Users and The James Beard Foundation to compare traditional market research [with synthetic audience research](#). Researchers gave AI systems the same brief and discussion guides used in their traditional research program, which had spanned 20 markets and three distinct audience segments.

While traditional research had taken two weeks to complete 16 interviews and gather 2,500 quantitative responses, the synthetic research conducted 160 interviews in a single morning. And when analyzing and generating insights, the synthetic audiences proved surprisingly effective. The system especially excelled at recognizing patterns across large datasets and even generated an innovative “surprising insights” category. Researchers concluded synthetic audiences held key advantages for advertisers looking to move quickly and cost-effectively.

Some argue synthetic audiences aren’t “real” or lack human nuance. But this misunderstands how AI models are trained. Synthetic audiences are built on the aggregation and analysis of real

human behavioral data collected at scale. Think of them as thousands of focus groups running simultaneously in a digital space. Or an artificial [proxy for your real customers](#). The foundation is still historical human data, just [processed more efficiently](#).

Synthetic audience testing routinely outperforms traditional methods for TV advertisers in the following areas:

Speed. Pretesting that historically took weeks or months of audience interviews and surveys can now be completed in less time than it takes to drink your morning coffee.

Cost. Research that once required tens (or even hundreds) of thousands of dollars in recruiting and participant incentives can now be done at a fraction of the cost.

Scale. Faster, less expensive testing means advertisers can test more. While most TV advertisers previously had to narrow creative concepts to five to seven favorite ideas for pretesting, it’s now perfectly reasonable to test dozens of scripts.

Marketing Architects developed [ScriptSooth](#), an AI pretesting tool for TV commercial scripts in 2024. Validated against the agency’s 20 years of performance data, ScriptSooth has proven more predictive of in-market response than copytesting with real humans.

Of course, the real opportunity for advertisers isn’t replacing human research. But synthetic audiences enable marketers to take creative risks while minimizing potential failures. And for a channel as expensive and high-visibility as TV, anything that provides greater confidence is invaluable.

OLD RULE

NO PARTIES ALLOWED

Traditional creatives don't want to socialize with modern effectiveness principles.

NEW RULE #3

PARTIES ENCOURAGED

Creativity and effectiveness principles must mingle for marketing that works.



NEW RULE #3

Parties Encouraged

“Nothing is more efficient than **creative advertising**.”

—[Stephan Vogel](#), CCO for Ogilvy & Mather Germany

Your carefully crafted TV commercial is playing, but your viewer is simultaneously ordering DoorDash, texting their mom, and wondering if their cat is Instagram-famous yet.

Today's TV viewers watch ads differently than those of decades past—often with a phone in hand, distracted, and increasingly skeptical of advertising. They can even avoid TV commercials completely in some streaming subscription tiers.

Yet TV remains one of the most powerful ways to tell your brand's story, if you understand these new viewing behaviors and adapt your creative accordingly.



Lumen Research and Dr. Karen Nelson-Field found that [video requires at least 2.5 seconds of active attention](#) before long-term memories form. On average, a TV ad will garner 15 seconds of attention. YouTube, on the other hand, gets only 4.5 seconds of attention for non-skippable ads, and Facebook ads earn just one second. That means TV accounts for 94% of all attention-weighted video advertising.

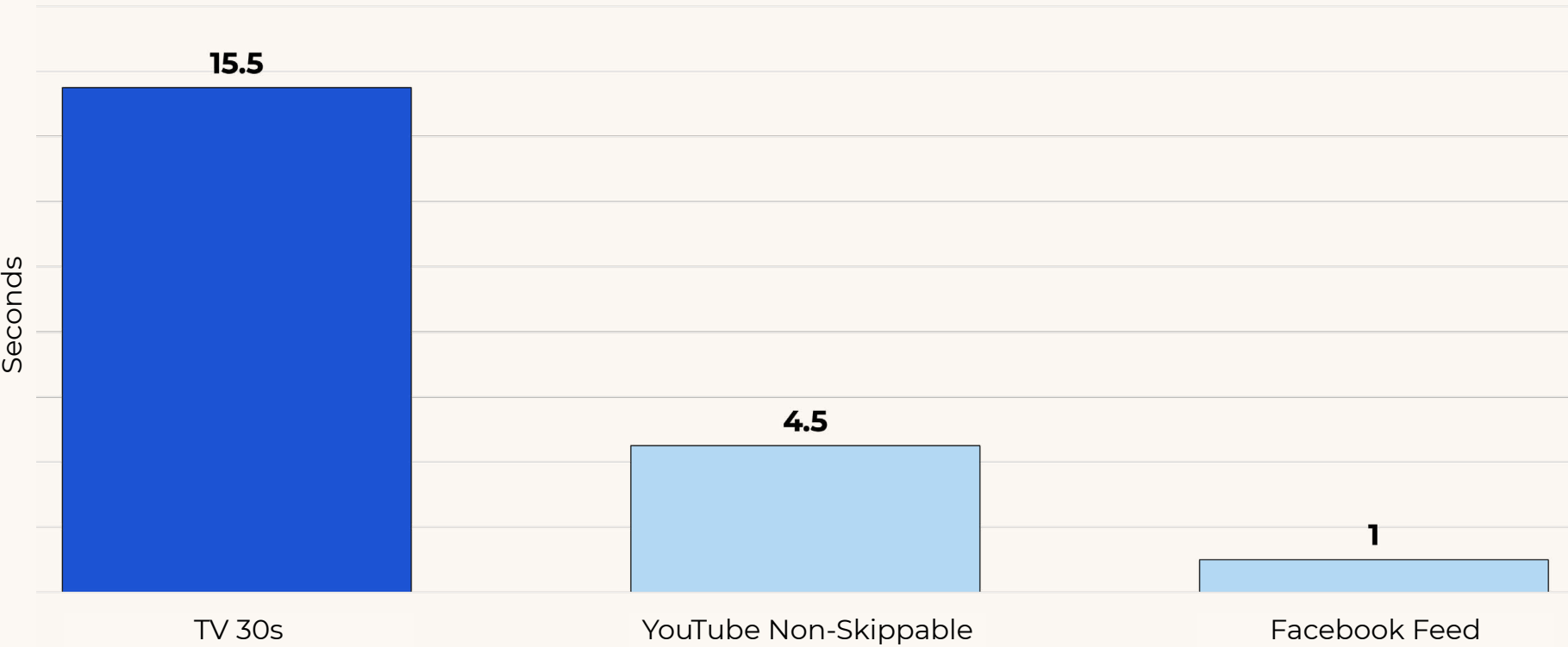
So you’re investing in the right channel to capture attention. Just don’t waste it.

Tell stories to win hearts and wallets.

In the “[Extraordinary Cost of Dull](#),” Peter Field, Adam Morgan and the IPA calculate how much more brands have to spend on media to make less compelling creative effective.

Average TV ad view time

The average TV ad gets 15 seconds of active attention.



Lumen Research

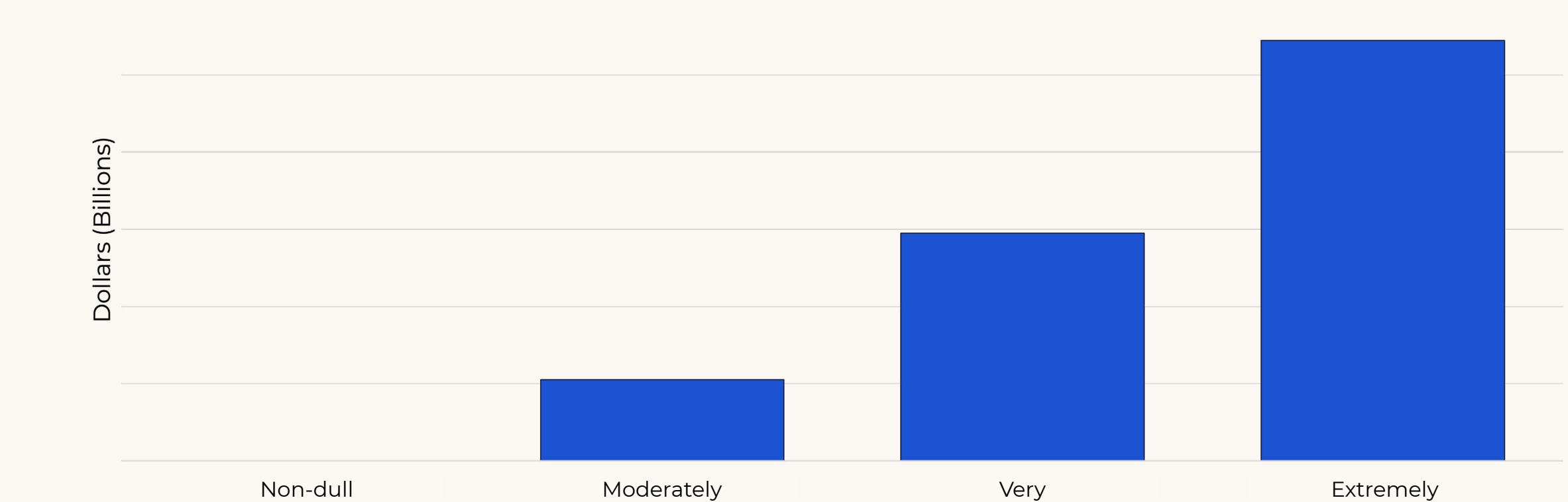
They found that US brands would need to spend an additional \$189 billion annually to make the dullest ads as effective as the top creative. They also found that 15.8% of TV spend is spent on extremely dull ads, which perform the least effectively.

That can either be very bad news or a major opportunity to stand out.

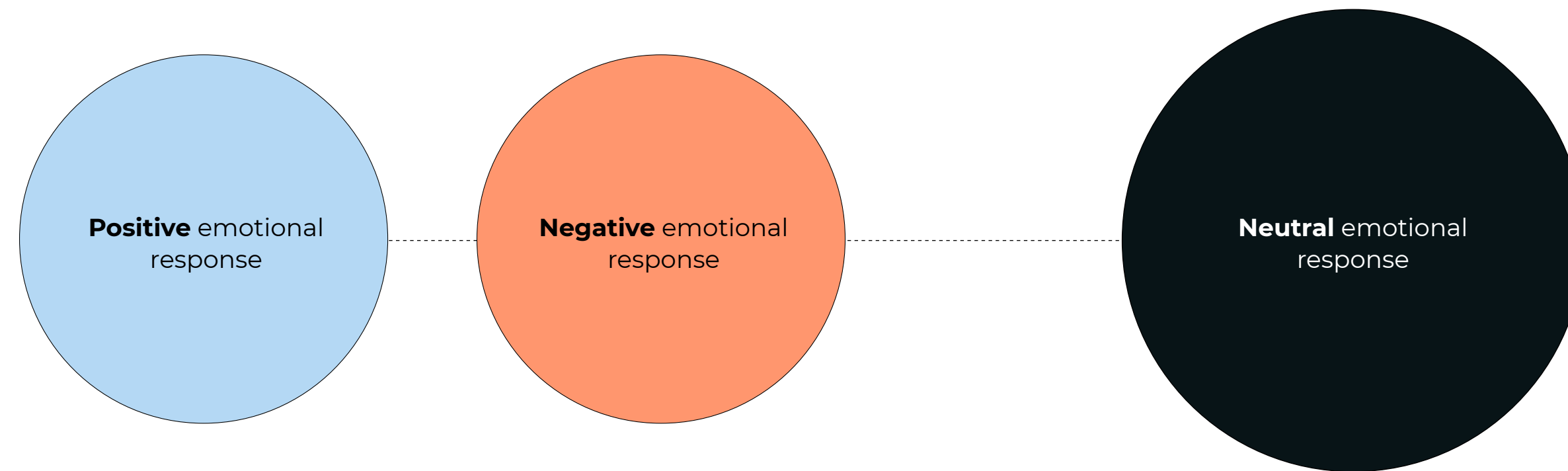
Not-boring creative may start with movement, intrigue, or a clear story setup. Analytics firm EDO found that the [most effective TV ads of 2024](#) often used bright colors, comedic themes, and leaned into culturally relevant moments. And System1 reports that creative elements like a discernable melody, vital characters, spontaneous changes in facial expressions, and even animals help produce greater attention and emotion.

Level of dullness

Estimated extra annual spend over current levels needed to match forecast growth potential if non-dull.



System1



Emotion matters because we don't make purchase decisions as rationally as we might think. And one of the best ways to keep ad attention once you have it is triggering an emotional response.

Unfortunately, [47% of TV advertisements](#) in the US primarily produce a feeling of neutrality. And you know what they say... hate isn't the opposite of love. That would be indifference.

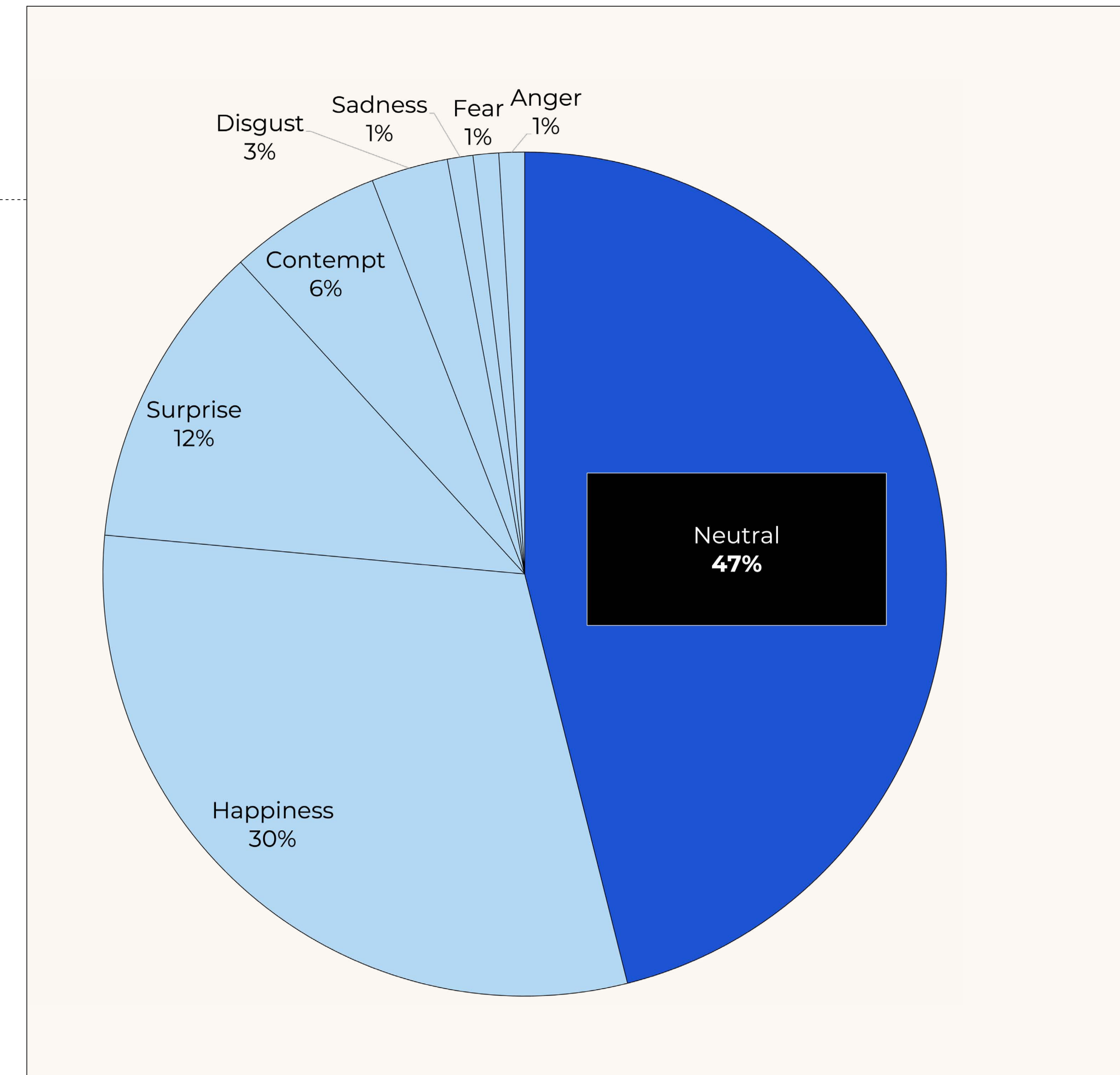
System1 also found that [story-based elements](#) like dialogue, fleshed-out characters, and a clear setting are slowly disappearing from TV ads today in favor of more literal elements—all counter to what actually drives results.

What does this mean for TV advertisers? Emotion is an often untapped lever for creative effectiveness, and one of your top goals as an advertiser should be making your audience feel something.

Positive emotions like happiness, nostalgia, or surprise produce the best long-term brand results, but even [negative emotions like sadness](#) can contribute to short-term sales spikes and produce better outcomes than neutral ads. Humor is one of the most powerful emotions for amplifying creative impact, but it's also one of the hardest to get right. Research from Kantar has found that while [37% of TV ads use humor](#)—more than any other channel—the overall use of humor in advertising is declining. Still, the impact of humor that resonates is undeniable.

47% of TV ads produce a feeling of neutrality

Failing to drive an emotional response makes these ads less effective.




System1


Evoked emotion in your TV creative by telling stories that resonate on a human level with:



Relatable characters
Characters help viewers see themselves in the story.



Conflict
A little tension keeps viewers engaged.



Audiovisual cues
Reinforce emotional moments with music, sound effects, and more.



Strong narratives
[Product](#) is interwoven with narrative.

Drive action with clear CTAs.

The modern viewing experience offers new ways for consumers to respond, and optimizing your call-to-action is important for any advertiser looking to drive short-term sales results with their TV campaigns. While traditional toll-free numbers (TFN) can still work for some brands, most viewers expect more convenient and modern options.

1. Drive-to-web. This is the call-to-action you'll likely see most when watching TV commercials. It's also the route most often recommended to clients. Searching the internet is how most consumers respond to ads and matching web traffic spikes to airings is a clear way to view a commercial's impact. Just make sure the URL is visible for longer than the last few seconds of the spot and that messaging on the website matches the commercial's messaging.

2. Text-to-respond. This CTA can work great for service-based businesses or as an alternative to the traditional call center. Chatbot tools are smarter than ever and can help qualify leads before a real person ever has to get involved.

3. QR codes. QR codes have only gained mainstream popularity within TV commercials recently, but they do provide unique advantages such as the ability to track scans as a performance metric. Just make sure the code remains on-screen long enough for viewers to notice, decide they want to scan, and actually pull out their phone.

Whatever response mechanism you choose, make it clear and easy to remember. The best calls-to-action feel like a natural extension of your story rather than an awkward add-on.

Turn audio into your secret weapon.

During ad breaks, viewers may scroll social media, answer emails, or grab a snack from the kitchen, so it's little surprise [60% of TV commercials](#) are heard rather than seen.

This means audio can't be an afterthought. TV is inherently an audio/visual format, but too often advertisers forget about the audio piece. They don't speak the call-to-action as it appears on-screen or even skip a voiceover completely.

But great TV creative leans into audio. Voiceovers should carry the full story, making the commercial coherent even without visuals. Music choice, sound design, and voice talent also become crucial elements that can dramatically impact response rates.

Next time you're crafting an ad, ask a friend or family member to listen, but not watch, the spot. If they can describe the story, the brand being promoted, and the desired call-to-action without seeing a thing, your TV commercial has a good chance of connecting with TV listeners as well as viewers.

Brand early, brand often.

If you're skilled enough to capture attention and keep it throughout your ad, the next step is making sure your ad is remembered and associated with your brand. After all, most of TV advertising's impact comes from its long-term effects. A commercial that entertains but is quickly forgotten—or that viewers remember but never connect back to your brand—represents a massive missed opportunity.

For memorability, [distinctive assets](#) are your secret weapon. These are the colors, sounds, symbols, or characters that trigger instant brand recognition. Think of McDonald's golden arches, Progressive's Flo, or Netflix's "tudum" sonic logo. When used consistently, these assets create mental shortcuts that help consumers connect your creative to your brand, even days or weeks after seeing a commercial.

Building memory structures this way serves a practical purpose beyond brand recognition. The more memorable your creative, the less frequently you need to show it to achieve the same impact. This can dramatically improve your media efficiency, an especially valuable change when facing TV's high media costs.



CREATIVE CASE STUDY

How Trust & Will brought heart and humor to a challenging category.



Overview

Founded in San Diego in 2017, Trust & Will simplifies the traditionally complicated and pricey process of estate planning. It all began when co-founder and now CEO Cody Barbo started looking into developing a will when wedding planning with his fiancée. He quickly discovered a need for affordable, accessible estate planning—and decided to address that gap.

Today, Trust & Will offers digital solutions for attorney-approved wills, trusts, and more. They’ve helped hundreds of thousands of families create estate plans and settle probate and are the leading digital estate planning and settlement platform in the country. And they’re just getting started.

Process

Trust & Will was a disruptor in a traditionally offline category. They felt TV could be exactly what was needed to both drive new customer acquisition and establish brand trust and familiarity.

Partnering with Marketing Architects, Trust & Will began developing a new TV campaign. They started with strategy and audience research, through which they gained a key insight—planning for death can be scary and confusing. The process exposes deep

fears, unspoken secrets and vulnerabilities, and it’s often a complex, time-consuming chore. Trust & Will simplifies that process, making sure everything is legally binding so customers can have peace of mind.

With this insight in-hand, “Make it Count” was born. Launched in March 2024, the campaign included two pretested TV commercials featuring real-life scenarios: a dad bequeathing a car to his son and a couple passing guardianship of their kids to a family member. They’re sincere, heartfelt moments anyone might recognize. But there’s a problem. None of their wishes count. They’re not formalized or legally binding.

Until spokesperson Eddie Blackwell Williams pops in to explain how Trust & Will makes it easy to turn conversations into legally valid documents.

A nationwide search was conducted to find the perfect spokesperson who could deliver authority, warmth, and a touch of humor. Eddie Blackwell Williams became the distinctive face of Trust & Will’s campaign, and his approachable yet knowledgeable persona supported immediate recognition across all campaign assets.

The campaign’s success stemmed partly from this consistency. Each commercial followed the same winning formula: emotional real-life scenarios where people make well-meaning but legally ineffective promises, followed by Williams’ timely intervention.

From drafting scripts to concept testing to shooting and post-production, leaning into emotive storytelling and keeping everything founded in the initial insight allowed the spots to communicate the opposite of what people may traditionally feel when thinking about crafting a will. People were meant to recognize themselves in the characters and maybe even laugh at the ridiculous situations.

This focus on storytelling, distinctiveness, and emotion? It paid off.

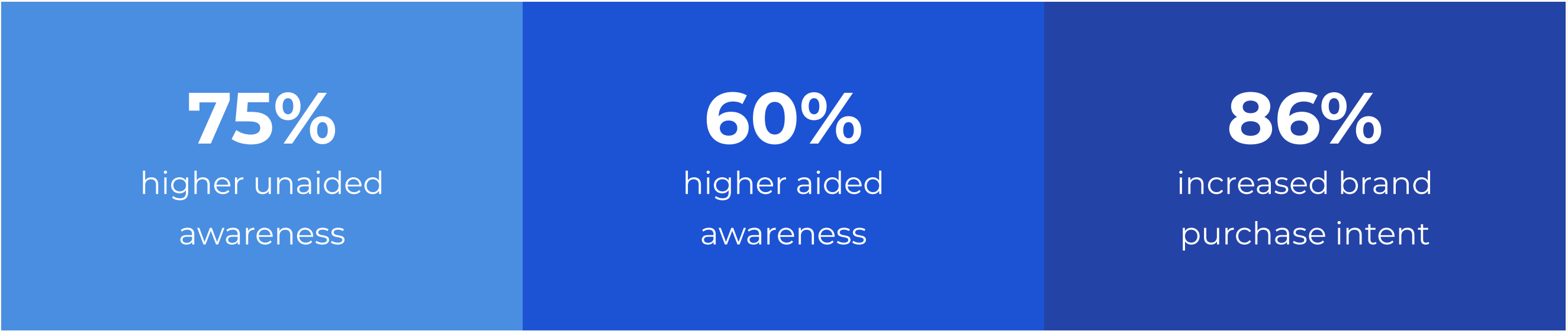
Results

The campaign drove meaningful outcomes for both performance and brand metrics. “Make It Count: Car” delivered a 30% improved response rate over previous TV efforts and “Make It Count: Kids” proved to be 18% more efficient in acquiring orders than the control creative.

Within six months of launch, a brand study reported unaided awareness had improved by 75%, aided awareness was up 60%, and brand purchase intent had grown a whopping 86%. In fact, this campaign was so successful, two more spots were developed to extend its success, deliberately maintaining the same distinctive spokesperson, scenario-based storytelling approach, and visual style to strengthen brand recognition and reinforce the “Make it Count” message.

Today, Trust & Will is the clear leader in online estate planning, with a distinctive TV presence that sets them apart in their category.

Trust & Will saw:



OLD RULE

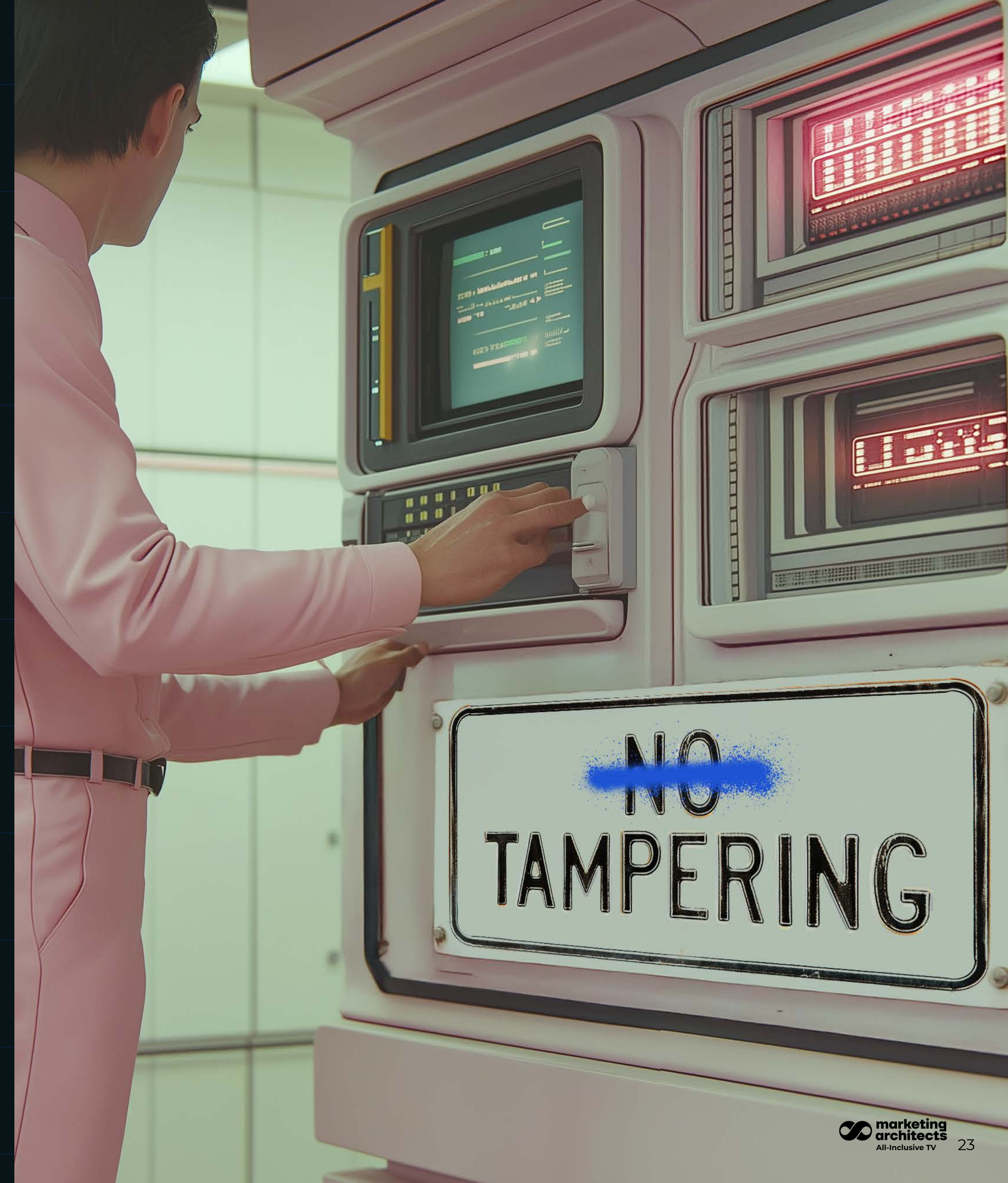
NO TAMPERING

The traditional approach asks us to wait for new tools to mature, then adhere to the guidelines.

NEW RULE #4

TAMPER WITH THE EQUIPMENT

AI is already transforming the future of creative. Tinker and tamper with a forward-leaning mindset.



Tamper with the equipment

“The true potential of AI lies in **its ability to amplify human creativity and ingenuity.**”

—[Ginni Rometty](#), former president and CEO of IBM

Every day brings a new AI tool promising to revolutionize video production. Runway can generate entire videos from text prompts. Stable Video Diffusion transforms still images into motion. And tools like Synthesia create AI avatars that can deliver scripts in multiple languages.

For TV advertisers, this technology hints at unprecedented creative flexibility. Imagine testing different endings for your commercial without reshooting. Or personalizing creative for specific audiences or regions. Producing high-quality content in days instead of months.

But feeling a mix of excitement and anxiety about this is not unusual. The advertising industry has met each new AI announcement with equal parts enthusiasm

and skepticism. After all, creativity has long been considered a uniquely human endeavor.

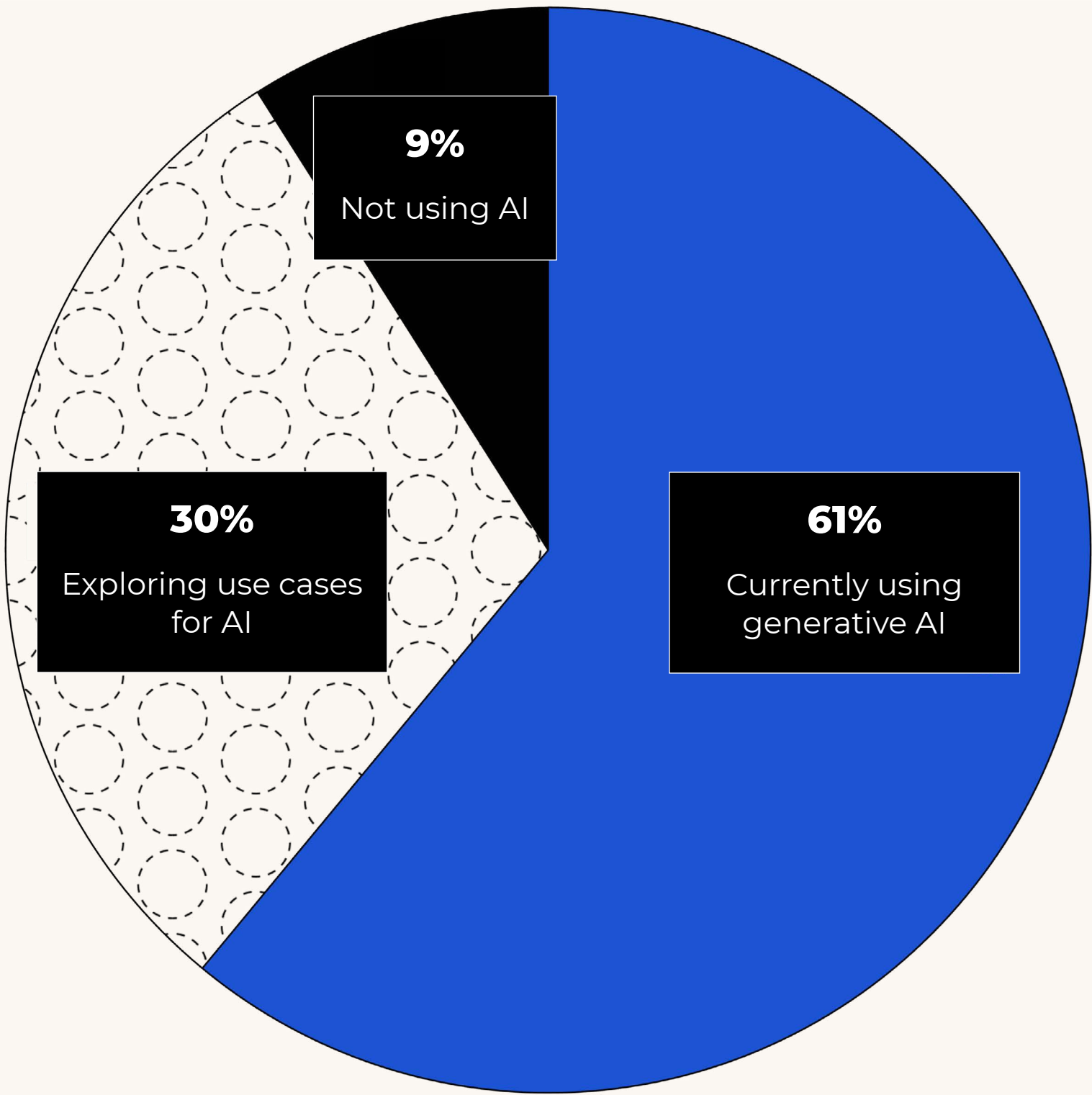
Coca-Cola is one brand, however, that’s taken a running leap into AI creative production. Their [2024 holiday campaign](#) featured TV spots produced in partnership with three separate AI studios and four different generative models. But while the spots were beautiful, they received mixed reviews. System1 gave the campaign an [excellent score for the emotional response](#) it triggered among consumers, but creative professionals heavily criticized the work.

Still, AI isn’t leaving the industry anytime soon. Statista reported that in 2024, [61% of advertising agencies](#) used generative AI in their work and another 30% explored generative AI use cases.



Most agencies are already using AI

Agencies not exploring AI's possibilities are already falling behind.



Statista

AI productivity meets human creativity.

Here’s what we know. AI isn’t going to replace creative professionals. But it will dramatically change how we work.

At Marketing Architects, one of our corporate values is “Technology First.” We believe that if technology can solve a problem more efficiently than a person, we should choose technology. In doing so, people are empowered to focus on what technology can never do... dreaming about what’s next.

The same principle applies to creative development. AI works best as a tool to enhance human creativity, not replace it. When Photoshop was first released, many designers were certain their days were numbered. Fast forward, and it instead became an invaluable tool that helped designers produce higher-quality work more efficiently.

AI is having its Photoshop moment. It can, and already is, serving as an equally helpful and transformative tool for TV creative.

Introducing shootless creative.

While “AI-generated commercials” like Coke’s grab headlines, the real revolution is happening more subtly through “shootless creative.” This approach combines traditional creative development with AI-enhanced production techniques.

Instead of replacing creative teams, shootless production augments their capabilities. A motion designer might use AI to animate a logo in minutes instead of hours, letting them test multiple versions. An editor can explore different music styles without licensing fees. A creative director may quickly visualize multiple art directions before committing.

AI also opens doors to explore creative concepts that simply aren’t feasible otherwise. For example, one client recently launched a commercial featuring an AI-generated bald lion to promote their hair restoration solutions. Without AI, that concept would’ve been shot down the moment it got in front of a producer. (Wisely, no one’s volunteering to find and shave a real-life lion.) But with the help of AI, our creative team was able to generate a lion in need of a little self-care. And a remarkably fun commercial was born.

Of course, through creative development, the human element remains vital. Designers, art directors, copywriters, and animators still drive the creative process. They develop concepts, craft messages, and ensure every element serves the strategy. AI simply helps execute their vision more efficiently. It’s a creative wingman turning ‘what ifs’ into ‘why nots.’

The future of AI creative.

While Runway initially led the charge for AI video generation, new tools like OpenAI's Sora and Google's Veo 2 have attracted even greater buzz. For TV advertisers, these tools offer exciting possibilities—along with practical limitations. Each platform restricts video duration differently, making it difficult to produce a complete commercial without additional editing and production work. And an even bigger challenge is inconsistency. Producing similar outputs from video to video is extremely difficult.

[LoRA \(low-rank adaptation\) models](#) offer a possible solution. These specialized AI models can be trained to recognize and reproduce specific characters, products, or brand elements across multiple video clips. While the technology is still maturing, its potential for ensuring continuity in AI-generated commercials is huge. [Misfits & Machines](#), Marketing Architects' innovation incubator arm, has developed LoRAs that can pop identifiable, consistent products into video without additional production work. Want a video highlighting a new line of Stanley coffee mugs? Done—with the press of a button and no shoot required.

But embracing AI for creative production demands more than just access to the latest tools. It requires a forward-leaning mindset. Organizations on the forefront of generative video are recruiting hobbyists

with AI experience because formally trained professionals simply don't exist yet in this field. Building capabilities internally, constantly testing new approaches, and avoiding over-reliance on any single tool or model are also important strategies as the landscape evolves.

Through all your AI exploration, your legal team should be a close partner. As regulations around AI-generated content evolve in real-time, staying informed about copyright implications, rights management, and disclosure requirements will help you maximize creative opportunities while navigating potential risks.

Admittedly, this is just the beginning. As AI tools continue developing, they'll open new creative possibilities we haven't even imagined. The key is approaching these advances not as threats, but as opportunities to produce better work than ever.



CONCLUSION

THE NEW RULES OF TV CREATIVE

CONCLUSION

The new rules of TV creative

TV remains advertising's most [powerful medium](#) for sharing creative work. But the rules for success have evolved dramatically. Today, effective TV creative requires a careful balance of art and science, human insight and technological innovation.

The four lessons outlined in this report provide a framework for developing TV creative that drives both brand and business results:

1. Ground creative development in strategy.

Start with real audience understanding, not assumptions. The most memorable ads come from deep customer insights, not creative teams' gut instincts.

2. Validate before you invest. Pretesting is no longer optional. With new AI tools making testing faster and more predictive than ever, there's no

excuse for discovering creative problems after spending millions on production and media.

3. Design for modern viewing habits. TV viewers multitask, split their attention, and have more content choices than ever. Creative must work harder to earn and keep attention through compelling storytelling, strong audio, and clear calls-to-action.

4. Embrace new production capabilities. AI and emerging technologies are transforming how we create TV ads. Smart advertisers will leverage these tools to produce better work more efficiently, while keeping human creativity at the core.

The future of TV creative belongs to advertisers willing to challenge conventional wisdom, leverage new tools and technologies, and remain laser-focused on results. The rules have changed. But TV's power to transform businesses through remarkable creative work is stronger than ever.



About Marketing Architects

TV advertising is a powerful channel. Done right, it can become an essential growth driver for your business. At Marketing Architects, we use an All-Inclusive approach to TV to help advertisers make the most of their TV investment. Connect with us at marketingarchitects.com to learn more.