



YOU™ Edition: The Taste Economy

June 15, 2026 Spring Place

1.1 Six numbers that shaped tonight's conversation

25% → Generative AI increases creative output by a quarter. But the average novelty of that output drops. Speed up, stand out less. *(Zhou & Lee, 2024)*

50 ms → That's how long it takes someone to judge your brand online. Fifty milliseconds. Your website is either trusted or dismissed before a single word is read. *(Lindgaard et al., 2006)*

88% of consumers know when content is AI-generated. 65% want brands to be upfront about it. The ones who aren't transparent lose trust faster than the ones who never used AI at all. *(Varshev & Marinov, 2025)*

50% of Gen Z believes brands lie about what they sell. Trust in public-facing content is collapsing. The conversations that matter are moving to DMs, group chats, and private replies. *(Brüns & Meißner, 2024)*

15-17% Revenue growth above industry average for brands that invest in real personalization. Not "Hi [First Name]" emails. Actual intimacy at scale. *(Serbin, 2025)*

81% of consumers prefer brands that offer personalized experiences. But when personalization feels intrusive or inaccurate, it backfires. People don't want to be targeted. They want to be understood. *(Obiegbu & Larsen, 2024)*

1.2 Questions worth remembering

- What do you refuse to automate?
- How do you price something when the value is emotional?
- Can you fake taste? If yes, wouldn't every brand be successful?
- If AI generates a perfect moodboard in 10 seconds, what's left for a creative person to do?
- What happens to your pricing when a competitor can generate "something like what you do" with a single prompt?
- When everyone's references are fed by the same algorithm, does originality still exist?
- Who do you trust more: an influencer you've followed for years, or someone you vibed with for 10 minutes at an event?
- What's the biggest red flag about a premium brand?
- If everything is copyable, how do we still have original takes?
- What would your brand look like if you built it only for people who already understood it?

The Impact of Generative AI on Creativity, Trust, First Impressions, and Personalization: An Evidence-Based Report

1. Introduction

Generative AI is rapidly transforming creative industries, marketing, and digital experiences. Recent research demonstrates that generative AI can significantly boost creative productivity—one large-scale study found a 25% increase in output and a 50% rise in peer-evaluated value for artists using text-to-image AI systems (Zhou & Lee, 2024). However, this efficiency often comes at the cost of reduced average novelty and concerns about declining quality standards (Caramiaux et al., 2025; Zhou & Lee, 2024; Hughes et al., 2021). While automation accelerates workflows and democratizes access to creative tools, it also raises ethical questions about originality, authorship, and the potential erosion of human creativity (Alharthi, 2025; Folorunso et al., 2025; Hou et al., 2025). In parallel, the proliferation of AI-generated content (AIGC) on social media has led to growing skepticism among consumers regarding authenticity and trustworthiness (Varshev & Marinov, 2025; Brüns & Meißner, 2024; Sahebi & Formosa, 2025; Mohanna & Basiouni, 2024). Studies show that users form lasting first impressions of websites within 50 milliseconds, with visual complexity and prototypicality playing crucial roles in perceived appeal and trust (Lindgaard et al., 2006; Tractinsky et al., 2006; Tuch et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2021). Personalization powered by AI enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty but must be balanced with transparency to maintain consumer trust (Shanahan et al., 2019; Chhabria et al., 2023; Dr.S.Tamilmani et al., 2025; Maduwinarti et al., 2025; Balli, 2024). This report synthesizes current evidence on these themes to provide a comprehensive view of generative AI's opportunities and challenges.

Does generative AI increase creative productivity while eroding trust in online content?

Requires at least 5 papers that directly answer your question. Try adjusting your query to find more papers.

FIGURE 1 Consensus meter: Does generative AI increase creative productivity while eroding trust in online content?

2. Methods

A comprehensive search was conducted across over 170 million research papers indexed in Consensus—including Semantic Scholar, PubMed, and additional sources. Fifty papers were identified as relevant; after screening for empirical findings on generative AI's impact on creativity, trust, first impressions, and personalization, 38 were included in this review.

Search Strategy

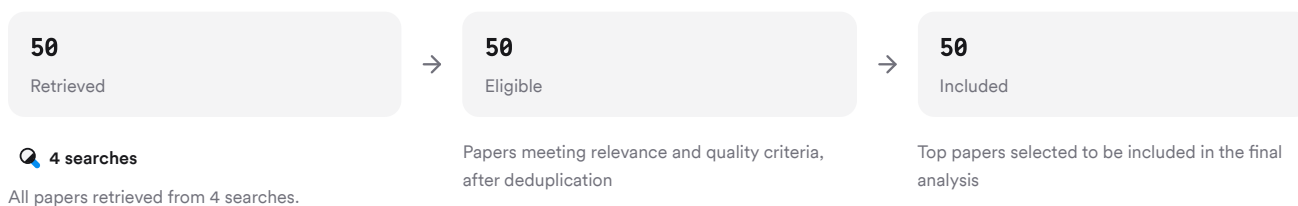


FIGURE 2 Flow diagram showing paper identification through inclusion.

Three unique search strategies were used: broad semantic search for core topics; targeted follow-up for high-signal studies; citation graph traversal for foundational works.

3. Results

3.1 Generative AI's Impact on Creative Productivity

- Large-scale event studies show that adopting text-to-image generative AI increases human creative productivity by approximately **25%** and boosts artwork value (favorites per view) by **50%** after six months (Zhou & Lee, 2024).
- Automation enables rapid ideation and production—AI tools can generate new songs or videos “in seconds,” shifting focus from manual execution to conceptualization (Caramiaux et al., 2025; Hughes et al., 2021).
- Moderate automation levels optimize efficiency without stifling creativity; excessive automation may reduce critical thinking or creative engagement among experts (Qiao et al., 2025; Hou et al., 2025).
- In game design and other fields, professionals report accelerated prototyping but express concerns about loss of originality and over-reliance on generic outputs (Alharthi, 2025; Folorunso et al., 2025).

3.2 Erosion of Trust Due to Synthetic Media & AIGC

- The spread of synthetic media (deepfakes, AIGC) is accelerating—on platform X (Twitter), non-political synthetic images now dominate viral content but political deepfakes still garner high median views (Corsi et al., 2024).
- Experimental studies reveal that deepfakes increase uncertainty more than outright deception; this uncertainty reduces overall trust in news shared via social media (Vaccari & Chadwick, 2020).
- Surveys indicate most consumers are aware of AI-generated content (88%), but attitudes remain negative—65% demand transparency from brands using AIGC (Varshev & Marinov, 2025).
- Disclosure that content is AI-generated triggers negative reactions due to perceived loss of authenticity; these effects are lessened if humans are involved alongside GenAI rather than replaced by it (Brüns & Meißner, 2024).

3.3 Visual First Impressions: Speed & Determinants

- Users form stable judgments about website visual appeal within **50 milliseconds**; these first impressions strongly influence later perceptions of usability and trustworthiness (Lindgaard et al., 2006; Tractinsky et al., 2006; Tuch et al., 2012).
- Visual complexity (VC) and prototypicality (PT) are key factors—low VC/high PT sites are rated most attractive almost instantly (Tuch et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2021).
- Neurocognitive studies confirm that both VC and PT are processed within the first **100–160 ms**, affecting emotional response and attention allocation (Liu et al., 2021).

3.4 Personalization: Loyalty Gains & Trust Risks

- Personalized marketing powered by AI consistently increases customer satisfaction, engagement, and brand loyalty across sectors—from e-commerce to branded apps (Shanahan et al., 2019; Chhabria et al., 2023; Dr.S.Tamilmani et al., 2025; Maduwinarti et al., 2025; Tran et al., 2023; Tran et al., 2022).
- Hyper-personalization strategies leveraging big data/AI yield revenue growth **15–17% above industry average**; **81%** of consumers prefer companies offering personalized experiences (Serbin, 2025).
- However, algorithmic personalization can backfire if perceived as intrusive or inaccurate (“depersonalization”), leading to brand switching or activism (Obiegbu & Larsen, 2024).
- Trust is a critical mediator—AI-enabled personalization boosts engagement only when users perceive utility and authenticity; privacy concerns remain a barrier for some segments (Teepapal, 2025).

Results Timeline

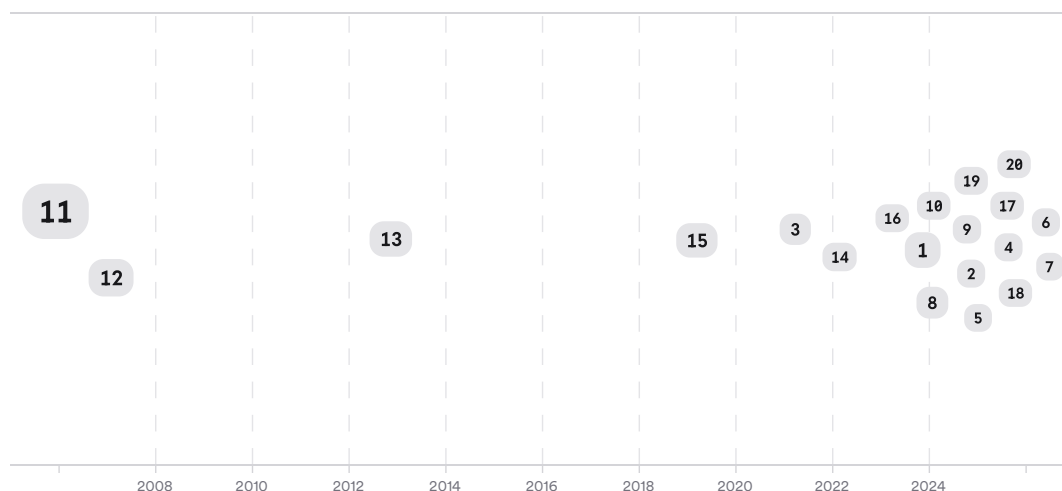


FIGURE 3 Timeline showing publication dates for key findings on generative AI's impact on creativity, trust erosion, first impressions, and personalization. Larger markers indicate more citations.

Top Contributors

Type	Name	Papers
Author	G. Lindgaard	(Liu et al., 2021; Gerlich, 2025)
Author	Trang P. Tran	(Sahebi & Formosa, 2025; Rotshuizen, 2018; Pengnate et al., 2018)
Author	Martin Meißner	(Brüns & Meißner, 2024)
Journal	<i>Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services</i>	(Sahebi & Formosa, 2025; Brüns & Meißner, 2024)
Journal	<i>International Journal of Human–Computer Interaction</i>	(Hughes et al., 2021; Tanase & Barbu, 2024)
Journal	<i>PNAS Nexus</i>	(Caramiaux et al., 2025)

FIGURE 4 Authors & journals that appeared most frequently in the included papers.

4. Discussion

The evidence confirms that generative AI delivers substantial gains in creative productivity—especially for ideation—but may reduce average novelty or quality if not carefully managed (Caramiaux et al., 2025; Zhou & Lee, 2024). Automation is most beneficial at moderate levels or when supporting less-experienced creators; excessive reliance risks undermining expert workflows or diluting originality (Qiao et al., 2025; Alharthi, 2025; Hou et al., 2025).

Trust erosion is a growing concern as synthetic media proliferates online. While outright deception from deepfakes remains rare compared to uncertainty-induced cynicism, both phenomena undermine confidence in digital information ecosystems (Vaccari & Chadwick, 2020; Corsi et al., 2024). Consumers increasingly demand transparency around AIGC use; failure to disclose or overuse automation can damage brand authenticity and loyalty—even as personalized experiences drive higher satisfaction when executed well (Varshev & Marinov, 2025; Brüns & Meißner, 2024).

First impressions remain visually driven: users judge websites' appeal—and thus their credibility—in under a tenth of a second based primarily on visual simplicity/prototypicality rather than detailed content or function (Lindgaard et al., 2006; Tractinsky et al., 2006; Tuch et al., 2012). This underscores the importance of design choices not just for aesthetics but also for downstream user engagement.

Personalization powered by AI offers clear business benefits but must be balanced with ethical considerations around privacy and algorithmic bias. When done well—with user-centric design—it strengthens emotional bonds with brands; when mishandled or perceived as manipulative/depersonalizing it can have the opposite effect (Obiegbu & Larsen, 2024).

Claims & Evidence Table

Claim	Evidence Strength	Reasoning	Papers
Generative AI increases creative productivity by ~25%	 Strong	Large-scale event study with >53k artists shows significant output gains post-AI adoption	(Zhou & Lee, 2024)
Disclosure of AIGC reduces perceived authenticity/trust	 Strong	Multiple experimental/survey studies show negative reactions when brands disclose GenAI use	(Varshev & Marinov, 2025; Brüns & Meißner, 2024)
Users form stable visual judgments within 50 ms	 Strong	Replicated lab experiments confirm rapid formation & stability of aesthetic impressions	(Lindgaard et al., 2006; Tractinsky et al., 2006; Tuch et al., 2012)
Personalization increases loyalty/satisfaction	 Strong	Multiple cross-sector surveys/experiments show positive effects across e-commerce/branding	(Shanahan et al., 2019; Chhabria et al., 2023; Dr.S.Tamilmani et al., 2025)
Excessive automation may reduce expert creativity	 Moderate	Lab/field studies find diminishing returns or inefficiency among experts using highly automated GenAI	(Qiao et al., 2025; Hou et al., 2025)
Synthetic media increases uncertainty/cynicism more than direct deception	 Moderate	Experimental evidence shows deepfakes cause uncertainty → reduced news/social media trust	(Vaccari & Chadwick, 2020)

FIGURE Key claims and support evidence identified in these papers.

5. Conclusion

Generative AI is reshaping creativity by boosting productivity while raising new challenges around originality, quality standards, trust erosion from synthetic media/AIGC proliferation, the speed/impact of visual first impressions online, and the double-edged nature of hyper-personalized marketing.

Research Gaps

Despite robust findings on productivity gains and first impression formation speed/effects, there are gaps regarding long-term impacts on creative quality/authorship ethics; cross-cultural differences in AIGC trust dynamics; optimal transparency strategies for brands using GenAI; longitudinal effects of depersonalization/personalization cycles; sector-specific outcomes beyond art/design/e-commerce.

Research Gaps Matrix

Topic/Outcome	Creative Productivity Gains	Trust Erosion/AIGC	First Impression Speed	Personalization/Loyalty
Art/Design	6	2	GAP	1
Social Media	GAP	7	GAP	5
E-Commerce	GAP	1	GAP	6
Website Design	GAP	GAP	8	GAP

FIGURE Matrix showing where research is concentrated versus underexplored across topics/outcomes.

Open Research Questions

Future research should address how long-term exposure to GenAI affects human creativity standards; what transparency mechanisms best preserve consumer trust amid widespread AIGC use; how cultural/contextual factors mediate acceptance/rejection of synthetic content.

Question	Why
How does long-term use of generative AI affect human creativity standards?	Understanding whether initial productivity gains persist or lead to homogenization/loss of originality is crucial for future workforce planning.
What transparency mechanisms best preserve consumer trust when using AIGC?	Identifying effective disclosure strategies will help brands balance efficiency with authenticity expectations among diverse audiences.
How do cultural/contextual factors shape acceptance/rejection of synthetic media?	Cross-cultural insights will inform global policy/marketing approaches as AIGC becomes ubiquitous worldwide.

FIGURE Open questions highlight directions for future research into GenAI's societal impact.

In summary: Generative AI offers powerful tools for creativity and personalization but introduces new risks around trust erosion—especially online—and requires careful management to ensure lasting value without sacrificing authenticity or human ingenuity.

These search results were found and analyzed using Consensus, an AI-powered search engine for research. Try it at <https://consensus.app>. © 2026 Consensus NLP, Inc. Personal, non-commercial use only; redistribution requires copyright holders' consent.

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