AI and content creation: insights from creators

Generate subtitles

Mediaforta

The World's Most Specialised Content Creators

Emma — Senior
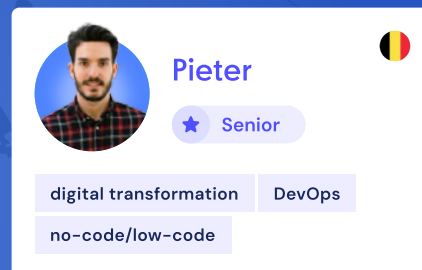Finance | HR | Legal | Tax

Pieter — Senior
digital transformation | DevOps | no-code/low-code

Emily — Senior
UX | In app UX | User flows
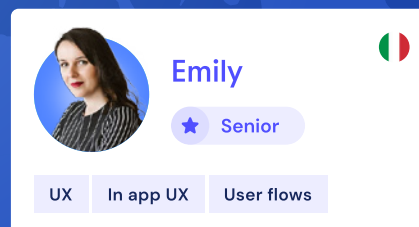
Enrico — Senior
AI | cybersecurity | data breaches | Linux

Mediaforta

Mediaforta is a skill-based content marketing agency on a mission to help brands grow through thought leadership content. We give our clients the opportunity to work with the world's most specialised content creators from our international network, managed by our experienced project managers and cutting-edge software, to achieve successful content marketing.

www.mediaforta.com

Great Content, Better Marketing

Executive summary

Generative AI seemed to arrive out of nowhere in November 2022, with the launch of ChatGPT. It promised to revolutionise work, increasing productivity, reducing cost, and cutting out boring, repetitive tasks.

Now the first stirrings of discontent with the technology are emerging. John Lovelock, a Research Vice President and Distinguished Analyst at research company Gartner, was quoted in The Economist recently saying that AI was entering the 'trough of disillusionment' in the company's famous Hype Cycle.

So this report looks at the use of AI tools among content creators. It examines how widely the technology is being used, what for, and what benefits it's delivering. It discusses the ethical issues surrounding AI. And it looks to the future, both of the technology itself and of those who are using it for content creation.

Cover image:

50% AI-index >

The key findings of the report

AI tools have been almost universally adopted by our content creators. Only 5% said they don't use any AI tools in their work. However, they are most often used for "background tasks" or "writing support", rather than content generation.

These include AI-powered transcription, research, ideation, and generation of interview questions. Our content creators also use AI to help with structure, to fix problematic sections of text, and for proofreading. Beyond this, AI tools are helping them expand their work into new areas, such as design, video creation, and SEO. But they don't use it to write copy.

AI tools are delivering increased productivity. Almost three-quarters of respondents (73%) said AI had improved their productivity either significantly or somewhat. But the majority are still only using it in less than a quarter of their work.

Lack of trust in AI is holding back further use. Every mention of AI-based research came with the caveat that results need to be double-checked for veracity. Similarly, almost all our respondents felt that AI-generated copy was never 'publication-ready'. It always needed further work from them to make it acceptable.

In the immediate future, respondents are more likely to be optimistic than fearful. This perhaps represents the flip-side of their distrust of AI's capabilities. They don't think it can ever be truly 'creative', so they're less worried about it replacing them.

Their long-term outlook is gloomier. Many expect the quality of AI-generated content to decline, rather than improve. At the same time, they expect businesses to use it more, because it's cheaper, and because they don't value the work of human writers.

The future our creators want to see is humans and AI working together, rather than in competition. They want the developers of the technology to move it in that direction. While they're waiting, they're finding their own ways of making that partnership happen.
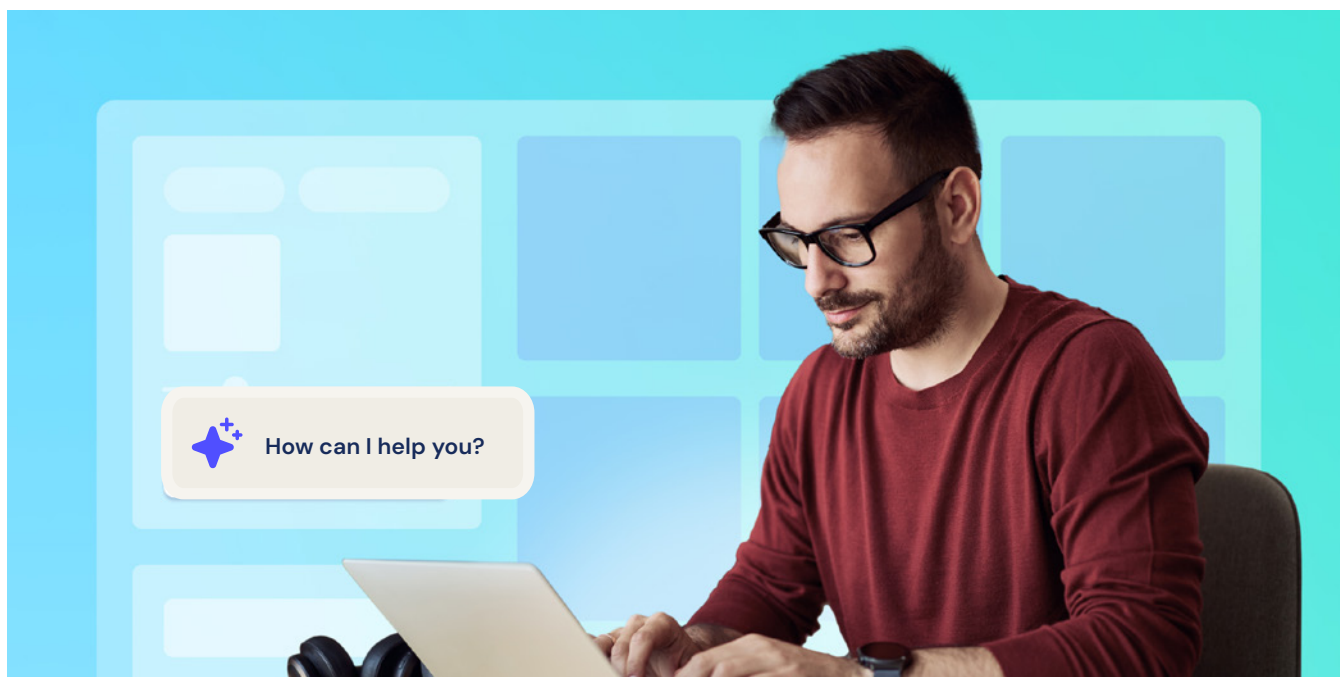

How can I help you?

Mediaforta whitepaper. AI and content creation: insights from creators

3

Table of contents

I'm Tom, founder of Mediaforta.

Mediaforta's mission is to help companies grow with thought leadership content, because great content is a crucial part of great marketing.

AI is sweeping through our society like a whirlwind. AI is something big - some even consider its arrival to be a greater shift than the emergence of the internet. One thing is certain: AI is here to stay, and it will structurally accelerate and improve the way we work.

Superpower
At Mediaforta, we believe in the superpower that emerges when our specialised content creators work with AI. But how are content creators using AI today? What is their vision? And what impact is AI currently having on their work?

It was high time to explore these questions. At Mediaforta, we have access to an international network of more than 1,500 specialized content creators. We surveyed them through an online questionnaire and conducted in-depth interviews. One thing quickly became clear: our content creators are early adopters of AI.

Through this message, I'd like to thank all our participants in this research. And I'm also happy to share that for every completed survey, we planted a tree - giving something back to our planet.

You can read the results of our research in this paper.

Happy reading,

Tom Peeters
CEO Mediaforta

P.S. Do you have comments or suggestions? Don't hesitate to share them with us via *hello@mediaforta.be*.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence. The future, or just a fad?

The first part of 2025 has seen the first signs of discontent among businesses about the returns they're seeing from their investments in the technology. The Economist recently reported research from SP Global, a data provider, showing the share of companies abandoning most of their **generative-AI pilot projects has risen to 42%,** up from 17% last year.

Companies abandoning most of their generative-AI pilot projects

42%

Organisations that expect to increase their use of AI workflows over the next two years

83%

The magazine also quoted John Lovelock, a Research Vice President and Distinguished Analyst at research company Gartner, saying that AI was entering the 'trough of disillusionment' in the company's famous Hype Cycle.

Despite this, businesses' investment in AI technology continues to increase. SP Global Market Intelligence also found that 83% of organisations expect to increase their use of AI workflows over the next two years.

We wanted to understand how this is playing out on the ground. What is the experience of the content creators who are at the forefront of AI usage? Which AI tools are they using, how much, and what benefits are they seeing? Is AI increasing their productivity? What effect is it having on the quality of their work? And how do they see things developing in the future?

Methodology

To answer these questions and more, we conducted a two-phase research project. First, a structured survey was completed by 58 content creators. Respondents represented a wide range of industries and experience levels. The survey collected demographic data, multiple-choice responses on tool usage and perceptions, and open-ended reflections on challenges and benefits.

The second phase involved five one-on-one interviews with professionals drawn from different sectors of content production. These included B2C and B2B copywriters, and a podcaster who also maintains a blog.

How AI tools are being used

The first significant finding of this research is how widespread the use of AI is among our content creators. Only **5%** of respondents **said they didn't use any AI tools** in their work (Chart 1).

Of the tools in use, the most popular by far is **ChatGPT** (used by 79% of respondents). It's twice as widely used as the next most popular tool, the graphic design tool **Canva** (used by 40%). Google's Gemini, Anthropic's Claude AI and Microsoft's Copilot are each used by one in five of our content creators (19%). AI image generators Midjourney and DALL-E are much less commonly used among our sample (by 10% and 7% respectively).

This corresponds to the majority of our respondents producing content to be read (blog posts, articles, social media posts) or listened to (videos, podcasts).

The two areas where our respondents make most use of AI are for **idea generation (62%)** and for **assistance in writing (59%)** (Chart 2). These people are solving the perennial writers' problems. AI is aiding them with their research. It's coming up with ideas, questions and outlines. And it's helping them fix problematic passages, etc.

Automating repetitive tasks is often touted as the classic AI use-case. So it's striking that only a third of our content creators **(31%)** say they employ the technology in this area. However, many respondents noted that AI transcription is very useful. Other areas that many writers struggle with, such as SEO optimisation, and design and visuals, are also targets for AI support.

Our interviews revealed that our respondents are still reluctant to use AI for their actual writing. They think the results sound robotic, impersonal, or simply not human. One even told us some of their clients have software that detects AI-written content, so they "need to be careful".

Which AI tools do you use most frequently?

% of respondents (N=58)

79%	ChatGPT
40%	Canva
19%	Gemini
19%	Claude AI
19%	Copilot
10%	Midjourney
10%	DALL-E
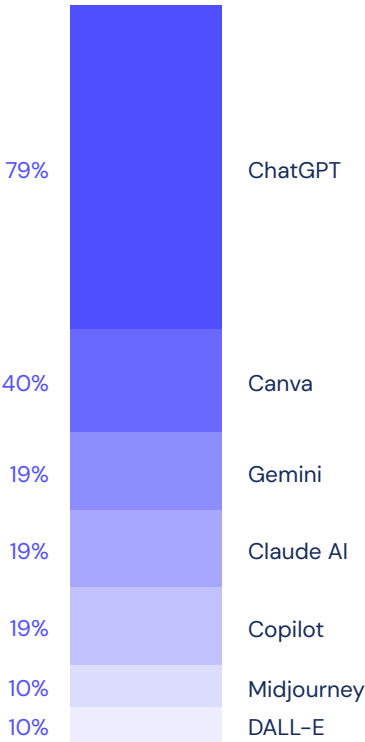
For what purposes do you use AI tools?

% of respondents (N=58)

Idea generation
62%

Writing assistance
59%
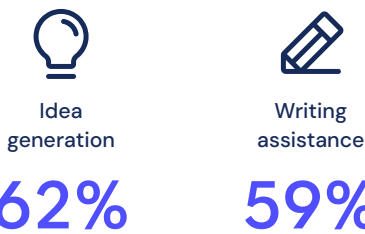
Usage and benefits

So we know that almost all our content creators are using AI. But how much are they using it, and what benefits are they seeing?

Chart 3 shows how much of their workload respondents think AI helps with. Over half **(55%) feel it helps with less than 25% of their work**. These are people who use it for what one called their "background tasks". This includes translation, transcription, summarizing and analyzing large amounts of text, and researching.

One in five respondents feel they use AI in 25% to 50% of their workload, and the same proportion feel it helps with between 50% and 75% of what they do.

The contrast between these figures and the percentage of people seeing productivity benefits from AI is striking (Chart 4).

Almost three-quarters of our respondents **(73%) said AI had improved their productivity**, either significantly or somewhat. Once again, transcription tools get the most praise. One interviewee told us: "They save time because I don't have to re-listen to recordings or type everything out during meetings."

Another said they find using AI to generate ideas quickly saves them time and energy. "I can cherry-pick what suits my brand," one said. Another highlighted the time saved on tasks like finding sources or information.

Given these benefits, why aren't our content creators using the tools more? Well, our interviews also revealed significant distrust of the technology. They don't believe the technology produces ready-to-publish material. And they don't trust the findings of its research. As one interviewee put it: "I use AI sometimes to find facts quickly, but then I still fact-check because I don't 100% trust what the AI delivers."

To what extend do AI-powered tools assist you in your content creation process?

% of respondents (N=58)

- 50–75% — 21%
- More than 75% — 3%
- Less than 25% — 55%
- 25–50% — 21%
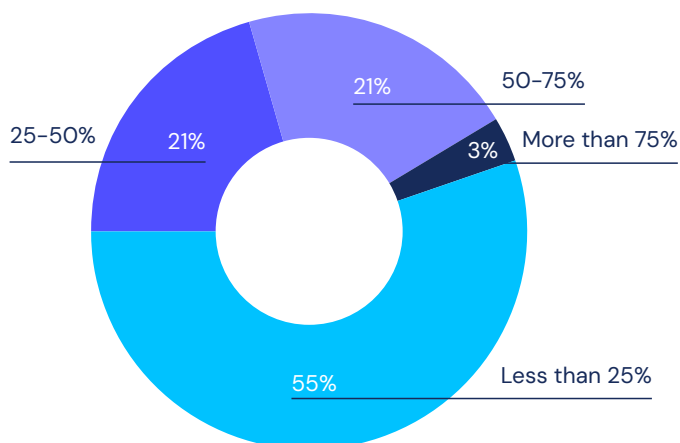
Have you noticed an increase in efficiency or productivity due to AI-powered tools?

% of respondents (N=58)

- Yes, somewhat — 33%
- No noticeable change — 21%
- Decreased productivity — 6%
- Yes, significantly — 40%

"Our respondents are still reluctant to use AI for their actual writing. They think the results sound robotic, impersonal, or simply not human."

Impact and ethics

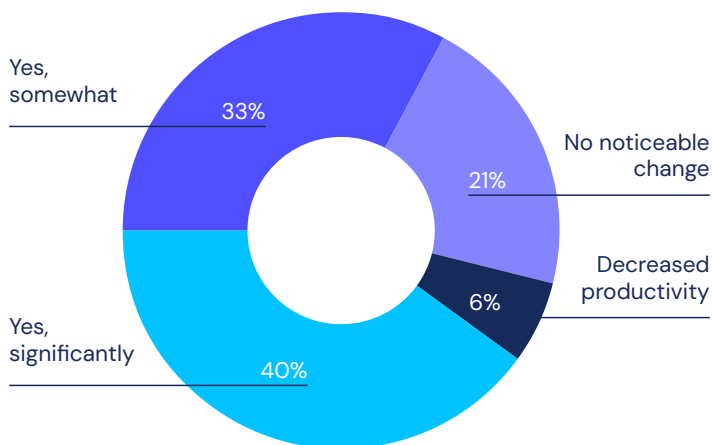We've seen the near–ubiquity of AI tools among our content creators, and the improved productivity most see as a result. But we've also seen that the majority feel AI only helps with a small fraction of their work.

This split is also seen in how respondents feel about AI's impact on the quality of their work (Chart 5). Exactly half **(50%) think the impact has been positive**, but almost the same proportion **(47%) think it's had no impact**.

The interviews that accompanied the survey produced a more nuanced view. Several interviewees contrasted improved productivity with little or no change in quality. One said: "I don't think it has changed the quality of my work. It just saves me some time."

Another agreed. "I don't use AI for the actual writing, only for structure and research, and sometimes for editing," they told us. "It doesn't impact the end result, just how much time I spend on the research to get there."

How has AI impacted the quality of your content?

% of respondents (N=58)

- 50% Positively
- 3% Negatively
- 47% Neutral
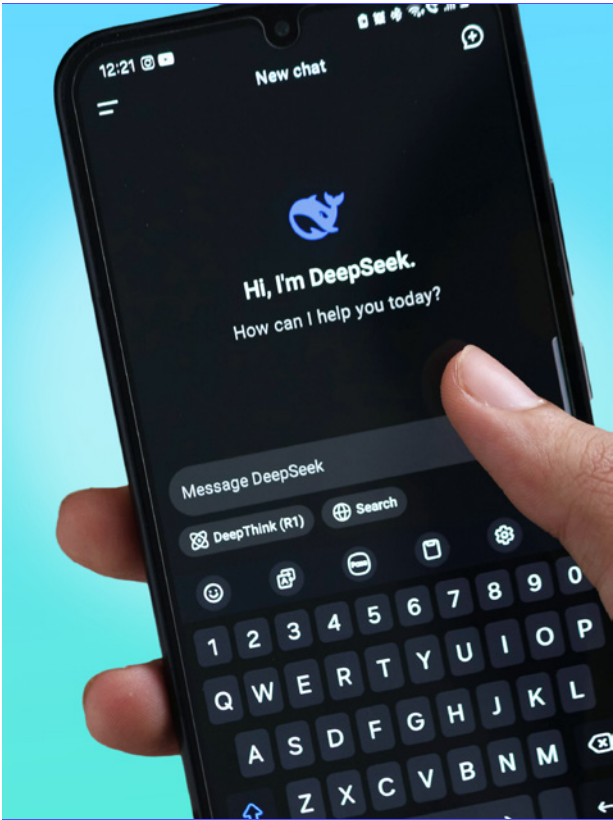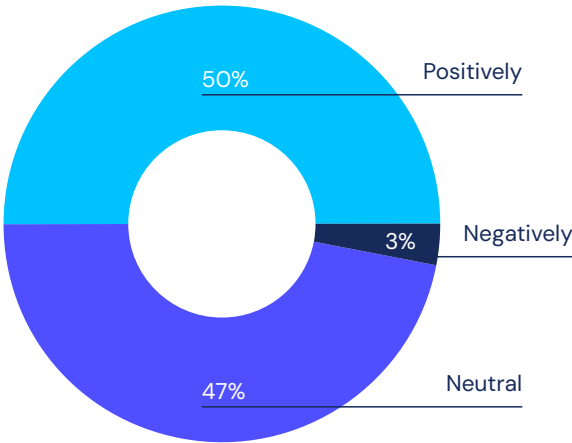
One person argued that productivity and quality are linked. In their view, increased productivity means more time to focus on the quality of the work. But another felt the issues impacting on quality are not ameliorated by AI tools. Content creators, they said, are more likely to use any time saved to take on more work, rather than taking longer over the same amount.

It's also worth noting that ideas of quality can be very subjective.

"I feel the impact of AI is positive," one person told us, "but we don't have the tools to measure quality, so that's a personal assumption."

Specific areas of impact

Digging into this further, we asked our content creators to share examples of projects where AI had made a significant impact. This confirmed the picture described above. Lots of people described using AI in the preparatory stages of a project. This included ideation, research, translation of information, transcription of interviews. Many also use AI tools for 'writing support'; help with structure, rewrites and proofreading.

Beyond this there was also a clear sense of our respondents establishing their own partnerships with AI. Several talked about using the tools to expand their own skillsets. For example, one described a "game-changing" experience creating TikTok videos. They used AI tools to streamline video editing, automate captions, and enhance visuals. Benefits included greater efficiency, more consistent tone-of-voice and, most interestingly, a creative boost.

Others have gone further. One explained how they've added instructions to ChatGPT for brand tone, audience, selling style, and offer.

Most respondents are establishing their own balance of artificial and human intelligence.

"I record a voice note, and tell it to structure the content based on my framework, brand tone and the offer I am promoting," they explained.

And someone else reported reaching a similar level, saying that all their projects now rely on AI. "When done correctly, it helps me tailor content to the target audience, refine copy, and ensure I meet readability scores," they told us.

Clearly, most respondents are establishing their own balance of artificial and human intelligence.

Generate subtitles

Mediaforta whitepaper. AI and content creation: insights from creators

10

Ethics and the future

Alongside issues of quality, AI users also have to contend with a number of ethical questions. Should the use of AI in content creation always be made clear to the audience? Is it okay for AIs to be trained on existing content without the permission of the content owner?

Then there's the question that, if not quite existential, certainly keeps content creators awake at night. Will AI take their jobs?

We wanted to know what our creator community thought about these issues.

"AI should be built in partnership with creators, not at their expense. Without that, we risk devaluing the very human creativity these tools depend on."

Should AI-generated content always be disclosed to the audience?[1]

On the first question, about disclosure, there was a very marked split. Slightly less than half **(45%) were in favor** of always making clear when AI had been used. Only **17% said such disclosure was unnecessary**, while the same proportion said it depended on the circumstances.

Digging into these findings, the 'always disclose' group cited the need for honesty, transparency, authenticity and trust. One respondent put this view very clearly:

"Disclosure of AI-generated content is crucial for maintaining transparency, building trust, and upholding ethical standards," they told us. "It empowers audiences to make informed decisions by providing context, mitigating misinformation, and addressing potential copyright issues. It establishes accountability and enables a clearer understanding of the technology's capabilities and limitations. In turn, that fosters a more responsible and informed engagement with AI-created material."

In contrast, the 'no need-ers' argued that AI is just another writer. "AI is increasingly perfomring a task similar to a human writer in the research and writing processes," one person said. Another comment was that AI is just another writing tool, like a typewriter or a laptop. Some one else argued that all AI-generated content is being checked by humans anyway. And one respondent pointed out that AI tools are going to take over anyway, so the assumption should be that all content has an AI element.

Do you believe AI-generated content should always be disclosed to the audience?

% of respondents (N=58)

Yes, it should	I don't think it is necessary
45%	17%

Interestingly, many of the people who felt that the need for disclosure depended on circumstance cited a variant of this idea was. If AI is only used in the research phase, they asked, does that need to be made clear?

One creator who believes in the importance of context expanded this argument.
"For consequential communications (journalism, medical advice, educational material), disclosure seems more important than for entertainment," they said.
"Similarly, using AI to impersonate specific people without their knowledge raises different ethical concerns compared with using it to generate generic content."

75% AI-index

[1] MediaForta has just launched an AI Influence Index, to show how much of a contribution AI has made to each piece of our content. Full details can be found here.

Should AI models be trained on content without the permission of the content owner?

I'm okay with it — 7%

Maybe — 12%

Absolutely not — 71%
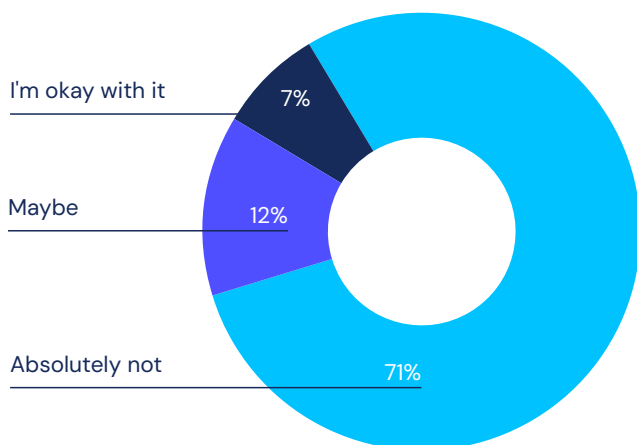
Opinion among our content creators initially seemed much less divided on this question. Almost three-quarters **(71%) said no**, using terms like 'theft' and 'plagiarism'. Only **12% said it was okay**, with **7% saying "maybe"**.

One of those arguing in favor pointed out that: "AI does the same thing as humans, taking content (or ideas) from elsewhere, mixing it with other content and thus creating something new."

Interestingly though, the comment that seemed to best sum up the views of both camps, yes and no, was this one: "AI should be built in partnership with creators, not at their expense. Without that, we risk devaluing the very human creativity these tools depend on."

Do you have concerns about AI replacing human creativity?

Our respondents were reasonably optimistic here. Just under half **(44%) said they weren't worried**, while under a third **(29%) said they were.** Only one in five **(21%) replied "maybe"**.

Broadly speaking, the optimists feel that AI can't be "creative". One creator told us that: "It can never create anything original, it only pulls from things that have already been made by humans and compiles an amalgam that it thinks is most likely to fulfill the prompt. That's why we talk about it being 'generated' by AI, not 'created'."

Instead, the optimists say, humans will adopt AI as another tool to augment their own creativity.

I'm not worried	I'm quite worried	I'm not sure
44%	29%	21%
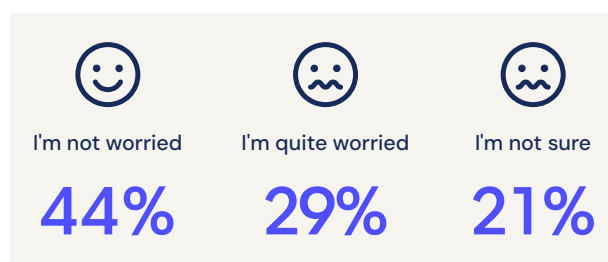
"True creativity stems from uniquely human experiences, emotions, and perspectives, elements AI currently lacks," one respondent told us. "I envision AI as a collaborative partner, handling repetitive tasks and generating variations, thus freeing human creators to focus on conceptual and emotional depth. Furthermore, creative work is deeply intertwined with cultural and social contexts, which humans understand in ways AI doesn't."

The pessimists, meanwhile, pointed to the rise of deep fakes and the rapid growth of AI's capabilities. They also noted the willingness of businesses to accept 'good enough' if it saves money. As another of our content creators put it: "I have concerns about the declining appreciation for human creativity by higher-ups who don't realize that a unique human voice is a big asset."

Mediaforta whitepaper. AI and content creation: insights from creators

13

## How do you think AI will impact content creation in the next five years?

Surprisingly, our content creators seemed less bullish when they were answering this question. Many thought the quality of AI content would decline, for a number of reasons. One was that the AIs would inevitably start to be trained using machine-generated content. Another was that AI copy and images would start to look more "standardised" due to humans becoming lazy and reliant on the technology.

People were also more cynical, expecting businesses to move more content generation to AI simply to save money. The more hopeful said they thought the audience would recognize the lack of human involvement. That, they felt, would increase the value of human creativity.

Most again hoped that the future would be more of a collaboration between people and machines, rather than a competition. But they weren't very optimistic.

"I'm not afraid that AI will replace human creativity, but I am afraid of people thinking it can," one of our interviewees said. "People will use it as a shortcut and devalue the creative work of human beings. In terms of job security, that's definitely a concern. You already see it happening. People think, "Why should I pay you when I can get it faster and cheaper with AI?" It's not a replacement but they think it is because they don't value the creative work we do."

"Respondents expect businesses to move more content generation to AI simply to save money."

Mediaforta whitepaper. AI and content creation: insights from creators

14
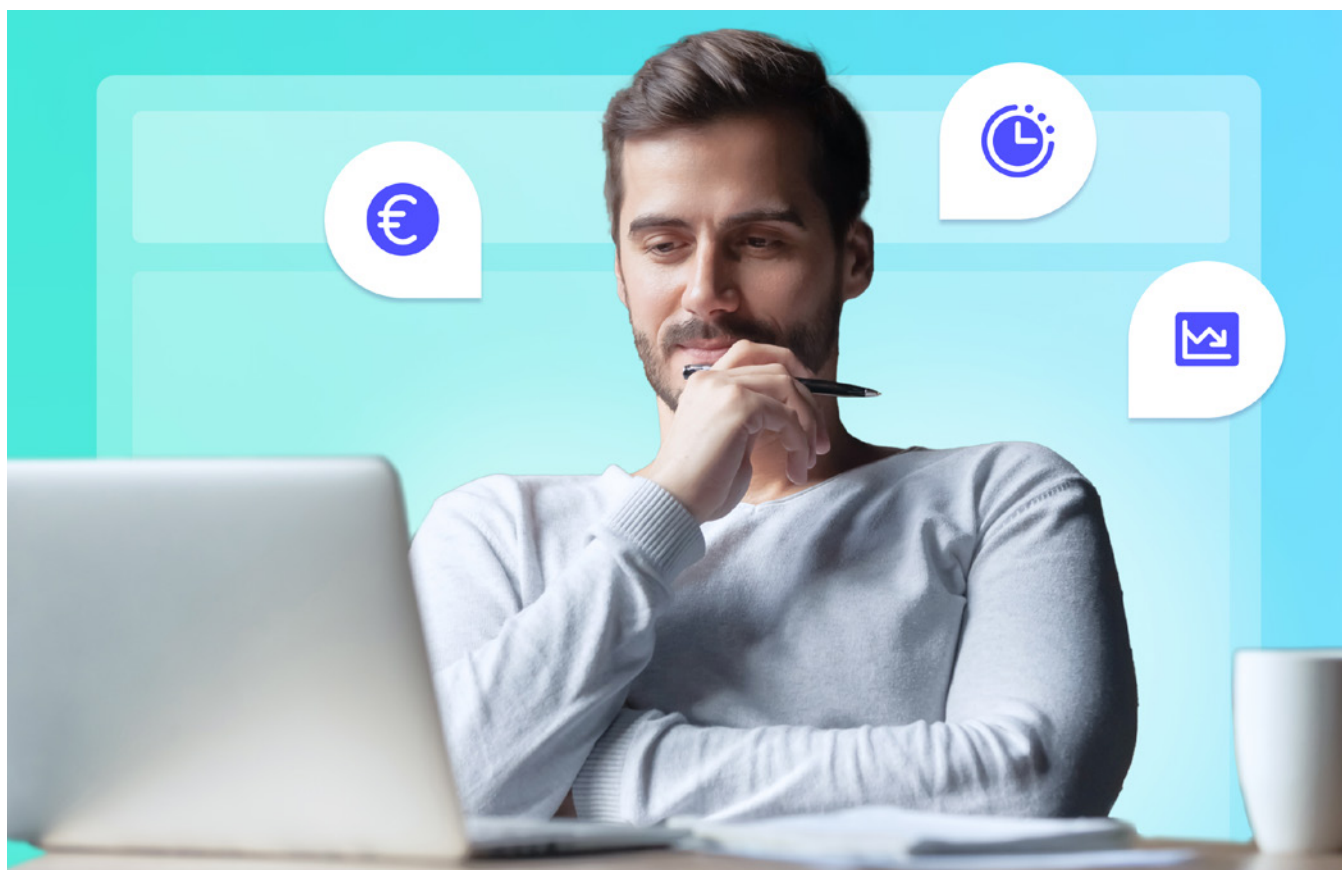
Key takeaways

Five significant findings emerged from the research done for this report.

❶ AI tools have been almost universally adopted by our content creators. Significantly, they are most often used for "background tasks" or "writing support", rather than content generation.

In the pre-writing phase, the most welcome of these tasks was AI-powered transcription of meetings or interviews. Respondents described this as a massive time-saver. Other uses for AI in this phase were as a source of ideas, to come up with interview questions, and for research. Then, while writing, our content creators use AI tools to help with structure, to fix problematic sections of text, and for proofreading.

❷ AI tools are delivering increased productivity. Almost three-quarters of our respondents (73%) said AI had improved their productivity, either significantly or somewhat. But the majority are still only using it in less than a quarter of their work.

❸ Content creators don't trust AI's current capabilities. For example, every mention of AI-based research came with the caveat that results need to be double-checked for veracity. Similarly, almost all our respondents felt that AI-generated copy was never 'publication-ready'. It always needed further work from them to make it acceptable. However, many of our creators also felt that businesses would be happy to use sub-standard AI copy if it were cheaper than a employing a human writer. This indicates a degree of cynicism you might expect from mature, experienced content creators. But it also raises the issue of professional pride, and of who should set the standards for the quality of copy required.

❹ Respondents are more likely to be optimistic about the immediate future than not. This perhaps represents the flip-side of their distrust of AI's capabilities. They don't think it can ever be truly 'creative', so they're less worried about it replacing them.
Further ahead, though, their outlook is gloomier. Many expect the quality of AI-generated content to decline, rather than improve. At the same time, they expect businesses to use it more, because it's cheaper, and because they don't value the work of human writers. This lack of respect is another perennial problem for content creators. Sadly, it's one that AI appears to exacerbate, rather than solve.

❺ The future our creators want to see is that of humans and AI working together, rather than in competition. They want the developers of the technology to move it in that direction. While they're waiting, they're finding their own ways of making that partnership happen.

Appendix - Details of survey respondents

What is your age group?
% of respondents (N=58)

- 45-54: 36.2%
- 55+: 13.8%
- 18-24: 5.1%
- 25-34: 19%
- 35-44: 25.9%

What type of content creator are you?
% of respondents (N=58)
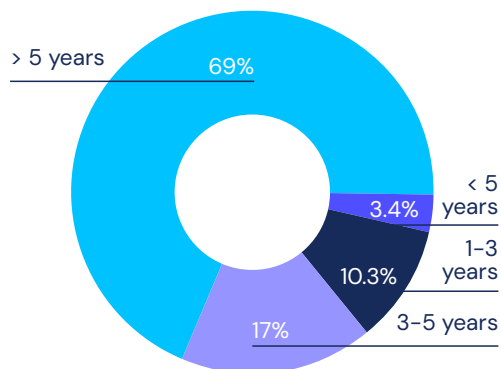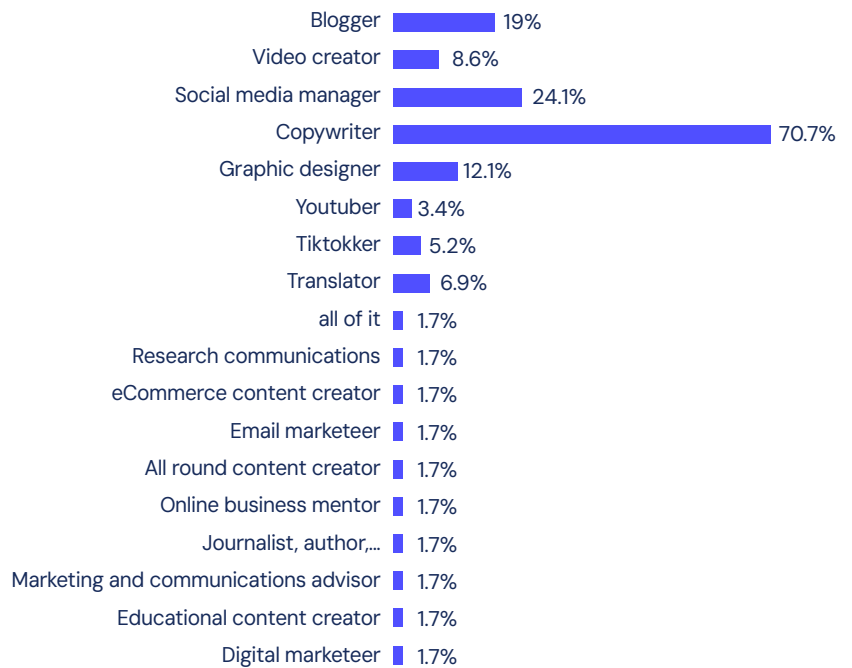
Type	%
Blogger	19%
Video creator	8.6%
Social media manager	24.1%
Copywriter	70.7%
Graphic designer	12.1%
Youtuber	3.4%
Tiktokker	5.2%
Translator	6.9%
all of it	1.7%
Research communications	1.7%
eCommerce content creator	1.7%
Email marketeer	1.7%
All round content creator	1.7%
Online business mentor	1.7%
Journalist, author,...	1.7%
Marketing and communications advisor	1.7%
Educational content creator	1.7%
Digital marketeer	1.7%

How many years of experience do you have in content creation?
% of respondents (N=58)

- > 5 years: 69%
- < 5 years: 3.4%
- 1-3 years: 10.3%
- 3-5 years: 17%

What type of content do you create most often?
% of respondents (N=58)

Type	%
Blog posts	56.9%
Videos	19%
Social media posts	51.7%
Articles	70.7%
Podcasts	5.2%
Texts, marketing material	1.7%
Web pages	1.7%
Web content	1.7%
Infographics, fact sheets	1.7%
Web copy, whitepapers, books,...	1.7%
Nothing	1.7%
Culturally relevant translations	1.7%
Promotional and creative copy	1.7%
Website copy	1.7%
Document translations	1.7%
Website copy, landing pages,...	1.7%

Mediaforta whitepaper. AI and content creation: insights from creators

16

Conclusion

Done well, digital content marketing is a fantastic way to make contact with your target audience. And, as AI becomes a reality, you'll be able to treat that audience as individuals. You'll generate even more leads and, ultimately, more sales.

At the same time, it's a complex process involving skills from many different areas – strategy, analytics, copywriting, journalism etc – in which every step must be carefully planned and executed. Get one wrong, and you shouldn't be surprised if you see poor results. Or no results at all.

Mediaforta whitepaper. AI and content creation: insights from creators

17

We 👍 computers, but we ❤️ people even more

Mediaforta

Great Content, Better Marketing

www.mediaforta.com

Is your digital content marketing
not going according to plan?

Are you not meeting your objectives?

Do you want to determine what the problems are,
and what you can do about them?

Request a free content marketing analysis with one of our specialists.
They will provide you with tailored, insightful tips and feedback
which you can put to use immediately.

Get in touch

If you have other tips you would like to share with us,
drop us a line at hello@mediaforta.be

Mediaforta is a skill-based content marketing agency
on a mission to help brands grow through thought leadership content.
We give our clients the opportunity to work with the world's most
specialised content creators from our network, managed by our
experienced project managers and cutting-edge software,
to achieve successful content marketing.

👉 Take a look at **our success stories.**

Mediaforta