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AI-Driven Advertising Activity: Perspectives from Peruvian Advertisers

Abstract

This study explores the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the creative process within Peruvian advertising agencies. The research focuses on understanding how AI technologies influence the practices of professionals involved in creative production and the perception of AI's role in enhancing or detracting from creativity in a market characterized by emerging digital transformation. Adopting a qualitative methodology grounded in the interpretive paradigm, the study placed particular emphasis on the insights and experiences of Creative Directors, who play a pivotal role in integrating AI into the creative process. In addition to these key professionals, the study also analyzed the perspectives of AI specialists, decision-makers in digital transformation, and AI consultants. Data was meticulously gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of how AI is reshaping creativity in advertising. The findings reveal that while AI offers significant potential to streamline and enhance creative processes, concerns about authenticity and the risk of diminishing human creativity persist. The study underscores the need for a balanced approach that integrates AI-driven efficiency with the preservation of original creative input, providing insights for future policy development and industry practices.

Keywords

Artificial Intelligence, advertising creativity, ethical considerations, digital transformation, marketing automation.

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1. Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become inextricably intertwined with everyday life, extending its influence into the realm of creative advertising, where idea generation and content production form the core of brand communication (Lee *et al.*, 2023; Xu *et al.*, 2023). As AI tools offer new possibilities for the conception and development of advertising campaigns, a dilemma arises between their potential to amplify human creativity and the possibility of supplanting human ingenuity, a concern expressed in recent literature and a topic of growing debate among industry professionals (Abdelmissih, 2023; He *et al.*, 2024; Camilleri, 2024; Vatankhah *et al.*, 2024).

The integration of AI in advertising has gained critical importance due to its ability to transform the efficiency and personalization of advertising content (Iyer & Bright, 2024; Feng & Chen, 2022). However, its rise brings with it a set of ethical and professional questions (Agarwal *et al.*, 2024; Corrêa *et al.*, 2023). Emerging research points to an AI-driven revolution in the advertising industry but highlights a gap in the deep understanding of its impact on creativity, particularly in how professionals involved in the creative process perceive and adapt to the automation of their practices—a gap that is especially pronounced in emerging markets such as Peru.

Previous studies have explored the use of AI in various facets of advertising, but few have comprehensively addressed how it directly affects creativity in advertising agencies, especially in contexts like Peru (Agarwal *et al.*, 2024; Corrêa *et al.*, 2023). While the management of advertising creativity is often considered a global phenomenon, the adoption and integration of AI in this field can be influenced by local cultural and economic contexts (Roca *et al.*, 2017). These factors may affect how AI tools are perceived and implemented within different regions, leading to potential variations in creative practices. Although advertising creativity has global dimensions, the contextual nuances of specific markets, such as the availability of resources and local preferences, play a role in shaping the adoption of new technologies (Iyer & Bright, 2024).

In this context, the central question guiding our study is: How is AI affecting creativity in Peruvian advertising agencies, and what is its projection for the future of the creative process in the industry? Addressing this question not only enriches the academic body of knowledge on AI and advertising but also provides advertising agencies and professionals involved in the creative process with critical tools to navigate the constantly evolving technological landscape. This work aims to establish a dialogue between technological innovation and human creativity, suggesting policies and practices that can balance both aspects for more authentic and effective advertising.

This study aims to fill a gap in the literature by analyzing how AI is reshaping creativity in a context like Peru, where resources and technological adoption are limited, but creativity is deeply influenced by local cultural richness (Roca *et al.*, 2017). Peru's unique characteristics make it an ideal setting for exploring the impact of AI on advertising (Mensa, 2013). The research seeks to expand the theoretical understanding of AI's interaction with creativity in this context, while also providing practical recommendations for the effective and ethical integration of AI in Peruvian advertising agencies. This dual focus will enhance knowledge of AI integration in emerging markets and guide its responsible adoption in Peru's advertising industry.

2. Literature review

2.1. *Development and evolution of Artificial Intelligence*

The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a fundamental pillar in digital transformation has significantly impacted multiple sectors, redefining paradigms in communication, human cognition, and creative practices (Abdelmissih, 2023; Miklavčič, 2023). AI has enabled advancements in the automation of complex tasks, personalization of experiences, and process optimization, radically changing how we interact with technology and with each other.

The academic definition and conceptual framework of AI have been the subject of detailed analysis, aiming to establish a solid foundation for its understanding and effective application in communication research (Gil de Zúñiga *et al.*, 2024). This conceptual effort is crucial for understanding how AI can be used ethically in advertising, balancing innovation with values like transparency and authenticity (Lee, 2022). While AI-driven campaigns offer personalization, they also pose ethical challenges, particularly in privacy and information manipulation. In regions like Peru, adapting AI to local social and economic contexts is essential for effective and responsible implementation, considering cultural nuances and local needs.

2.2. Ethical considerations in the implementation of AI in advertising

Ethics emerges as a cross-cutting theme in the adoption of AI in any field, including advertising (Wu *et al.*, 2024). González-Esteban and Sanahuja-Sanahuja (2023) address the ethical demands for responsible journalism in the context of AI, offering valuable insights on how similar principles could be applied in advertising. Their discussion on the need for responsible and ethically sound practices aligns with the call for transparency and integrity in advertising communication, especially in the use of AI tools that influence the creation and distribution of content.

AI not only promises technological innovations but also raises ethical and practical questions, particularly in sensitive areas such as advertising and communication (Gil de Zúñiga *et al.*, 2024; González-Esteban & Sanahuja-Sanahuja, 2023). Communication policies face new challenges in the AI context, demanding a careful approach to address issues of regulation, privacy, and ethics (Agarwal *et al.*, 2024). The implementation of AI in advertising can lead to practices that, while innovative, may also be intrusive or manipulative, making it crucial to establish ethical frameworks that protect consumers and maintain public trust (Fioravante, 2024).

These considerations are crucial for advertising agencies implementing AI, where clear policies on user privacy and data transparency are imperative (He *et al.*, 2024). Failure in these areas can erode public trust, harming both businesses and society. Integrating AI into the creative process requires a strong ethical framework that ensures transparency and accountability. González-Esteban and Sanahuja-Sanahuja (2023) stress the importance of ethical principles throughout the advertising process, from creation to distribution, to protect society's values and enhance the credibility of advertising practices in the long term.

2.3. Impact of AI on communication and advertising creativity

The impact of artificial intelligence (AI) extends beyond mere automation, promising to reshape communication, human cognition, and creative practices (Abdelmissih, 2023; Miklavčič, 2023). A solid conceptual understanding and framework are crucial for the ethical and effective application of AI in communication research and advertising (Gil de Zúñiga *et al.*, 2024). Communication policies face renewed challenges in the context of AI, underscoring the need for careful approaches to regulation, privacy, and ethics.

In the digital era, AI has emerged as a disruptive paradigm with the potential to reconfigure communication and human cognition, significantly influencing creative advertising (Iyer & Bright, 2024; Song *et al.*, 2024; Wu & Wen, 2021; Wu *et al.*, 2022). Agencies are beginning to leverage this transformative potential to change how we interact with content and brands (Kour & Kour, 2024). However, this advancement has not been without challenges, particularly in the technological transfer to productive and business environments, where AI, machine learning, and deep learning are playing increasingly significant roles (Tamarit, 2023; Fioravante, 2024).

Creative departments in advertising, characterized by their highly collaborative nature, rely on the interaction between copywriters, graphic designers, art directors, and other professionals to develop innovative campaigns (Hackley & Kover, 2007). The integration of AI in these environments must be strategic, enhancing collaboration without replacing the human interaction essential to creative success.

AI offers opportunities to optimize the creative process without compromising quality. It can support idea generation by providing suggestions based on data analysis, though these must remain under the supervision of human creatives, who are responsible for maintaining content originality. Additionally, AI can automate routine tasks, such as audience segmentation and message personalization, allowing creatives to focus on more abstract and innovative aspects of campaign development.

However, AI implementation also presents challenges, particularly in environments that value creativity and spontaneity (Collier *et al.*, 2020). There is a risk that AI could be perceived as a threat to the authenticity of creative work, leading to resistance against its adoption. Therefore, it is essential that AI be introduced in a way that respects and preserves the creative culture, acting as an extension of human capabilities rather than a replacement.

These technologies are opening up a new field of highly personalized interactions and dynamic user experiences. AI enables companies to tailor their messages and services to users' specific needs, improving communication effectiveness and customer satisfaction (Hanna, 2023). However, to fully leverage these benefits, it is crucial to address the ethical and privacy challenges associated with AI use. Agencies and organizations must develop clear and coherent policies that ensure transparency, data protection, and respect for privacy, thereby fostering public trust and acceptance of these new technologies.

The classic Creative Process Theory (Wallas, 1926), later expanded in specific contexts such as advertising by authors like Smith and Yang (2004), provides a crucial framework for understanding how ideas are generated and developed in advertising. This theory identifies four key stages: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. In advertising, these stages are essential for understanding how creatives gather information during preparation, subconsciously process ideas during incubation, experience the emergence of innovative concepts during illumination, and finally evaluate and refine these ideas during verification.

Smith and Yang (2004) emphasized the relevance of this theory in advertising, highlighting how each stage of the creative process is fundamental to developing effective campaigns. This framework is particularly valuable when analyzing how AI might influence each stage. For instance, AI can accelerate the preparation phase by facilitating the analysis of large data sets and quickly providing insights. During illumination, AI can act as an idea generator, proposing novel creative combinations that humans might not consider. In the verification stage, AI can optimize the process through simulations and testing, ensuring creative ideas are effective and well-suited to the target audience.

The integration of AI into the creative advertising process has garnered increasing attention in academic literature, highlighting how this emerging technology is transforming creativity, a core aspect of advertising (Wu & Wen, 2021; Wu *et al.*, 2024). As AI becomes more advanced and accessible, its impact on the creative process has sparked both excitement and concern among researchers and professionals. Various studies have shown that AI can enhance creative practices by speeding up idea generation, improving audience segmentation accuracy, and automating routine tasks that previously required significant human time and effort (Vakratsas & Wang, 2020; Hanna, 2023). However, there are also warnings about the risks of over-reliance on technology, which could diminish the originality and authenticity of creative work (Lee, 2022). This body of research suggests that while AI has the potential to complement human intuition and vision in the creative process, it cannot replace them.

As advertising agencies in Peru and other regions adopt AI, ethical and privacy concerns arise that must be addressed rigorously and responsibly (Tamarit, 2023; Camilleri, 2024). Generative AI, especially in the use of tools like ChatGPT and similar applications, promises efficiency but also raises concerns about originality and authenticity (Zhou *et al.*, 2023). These concerns underscore the need to develop ethical frameworks and clear policies to ensure the responsible use of AI in advertising and marketing, protecting user privacy and maintaining the integrity of business practices (He *et al.*, 2024).

3. Research methodology

In order to analyze how artificial intelligence (AI) is influencing advertising creativity within Peruvian advertising agencies and to identify the characteristics they consider in their AI-driven creative practices, a qualitative research was conducted. This methodology allows exploring the experiences and perceptions as manifested by individuals (Daymon & Holloway, 2010; Patton, 2002), in this case, about creativity, their expectations and processes of adaptation to AI technologies.

3.1. Study design

The analytical methodology of this study was grounded in the interpretive paradigm. This paradigm focuses on understanding social reality from the perspective of the individuals who experience it (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is based on the premise that reality is subjective and socially constructed through human interactions and shared meanings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Researchers adopting this paradigm use qualitative methods to explore the perceptions, experiences, and meanings that people attach to their actions and environments (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

This approach was then chosen to explore in depth how AI is influencing advertising creativity within advertising agencies. This allows for capturing the complex experiences, perceptions, and processes underlying the adoption and adaptation of AI in creative practice (Salmons, 2015).

Grounded theory design was employed, following the guidelines of Strauss and Corbin (1990), to construct theories that emerge directly from the data collected. This approach involves a dynamic interaction between data collection and analysis, allowing to follow an inductive approach to theory building and the discovery of emerging concepts.

3.2. Data collection

Gentles *et al.* (2015) argue that the goal of sampling in qualitative research is to acquire information that helps understand the complexity, depth, and context surrounding a phenomenon, rather than the generalization sought in quantitative studies. To achieve this information, Palinkas *et al.* (2015) indicate that qualitative sampling strategies should aim to select individuals or data sources considered 'information-rich.' Yin (2011) expands on this idea by stating that selection should be based on the anticipation of the richness and relevance of the information in relation to the research question.

In this study, purposeful sampling was used, a technique recommended for identifying cases that allow for an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015; Daymon & Holloway, 2010; Patton, 2002). To complement this approach, the snowball sampling technique was also employed, seeking individuals from Peruvian advertising agencies with advanced knowledge of AI and/or its implementation in organizational contexts. A total of 25 participants, all holding professional profiles that significantly influence the creative process, were interviewed, including AI experts, decision-makers in digital transformation processes, and AI consultants. The initial goal was to interview 10 participants for each professional profile; however, data saturation was reached with 5 interviews per profile, resulting in a total of 25 interviews across all profiles.

Data Collection Methods: We used semi-structured in-depth interviews and analysis of relevant documents (such as project reports, AI strategy presentations, etc.). The interviews, which were the core of the data collection, were designed to adapt and evolve as the research progressed, respecting the recursive nature of the design process (Yin, 2011).

3.3. *Sample profile*

3.3.1. Creative Directors

Experience: Minimum of 5 years in creative roles, with at least 2 years working directly with AI technologies in advertising campaigns.

Functions: Responsible for leading the creative development of campaigns, overseeing the integration of AI in creative and strategic processes.

Interest: Interested in exploring new technologies to enhance creativity and campaign effectiveness.

3.3.2. AI Specialists/Data Analysts

Experience: Professionals with experience in implementing and managing AI systems within the advertising field.

Functions: Development, implementation, and analysis of AI tools for optimizing advertising strategies and personalization.

Interest: Passionate about the intersection of AI technology and advertising, seeking to maximize AI's impact on creativity and efficiency.

3.3.3. Account Directors

Experience: Minimum of 3 years managing client relationships in advertising agencies, with experience in projects involving AI.

Functions: Act as a bridge between the agency and clients, providing insights on how AI can meet client needs and improve ROI.

Interest: Focused on how AI can be communicated and sold as an added value to clients in terms of advertising campaigns.

3.3.4. Digital Marketing Professionals

Experience: Experience in executing digital marketing campaigns that use AI for segmentation, personalization, and data analysis.

Functions: Implementation of digital marketing strategies that incorporate AI to improve user interaction and engagement.

Interest: Interested in emerging trends at the intersection of AI, digital marketing, and advertising.

3.3.5. Graphic and Multimedia Designers

Experience: Professionals with experience in graphic or multimedia design who have used AI tools to create visual content for advertising campaigns.

Functions: Creation of visual elements for campaigns, using AI to generate or enhance graphic content.

Interest: Seeking to explore the creative potential of AI in producing innovative and attractive visual content.

3.3.6. Additional criteria

Geographic diversity: Participants from various regions of Peru to capture a broader range of experiences and perspectives on AI adoption in advertising.

Agency diversity: Including professionals from large, medium, and small agencies to understand how agency size impacts AI adoption and perception.

Innovation and openness: Individuals demonstrating an interest and openness to innovation and experimentation with new technologies in advertising.

The following table (Table 1) presents a detailed profile of the 25 professionals interviewed in this study. This comprehensive overview provides insight into the diversity of perspectives and experiences that were considered in analyzing the impact of AI on creativity within Peruvian advertising agencies.

Table 1. Demographic and professional profile of interviewed participants.

ID	Role	Gender & Age	Years of Experience	Agency Type	Year with AI Experience
1	Creative Director (CD)	M, 42	15 in creative roles, 3 with AI	Network	3
2	Creative Director (CD)	F, 39	17 in creative roles, 4 with AI	Local	4
3	Creative Director (CD)	M, 45	22 in creative roles, 5 with AI	Network	5
4	Creative Director (CD)	F, 38	16 in creative roles, 4 with AI	In-house	4
5	Creative Director (CD)	M, 41	14 in creative roles, 3 with AI	Network	3
6	AI Specialist/Data Analyst (AS)	F, 35	10 in AI systems management	In-house	5
7	AI Specialist/Data Analyst (AS)	M, 33	9 in computer science, 6 with AI	Network	6
8	AI Specialist/Data Analyst (AS)	F, 40	15 in AI systems management	Network	7
9	AI Specialist/Data Analyst (AS)	M, 37	12 in AI and data analysis	Local	5
10	AI Specialist/Data Analyst (AS)	F, 36	13 in data science, 6 with AI	Network	6
11	Account Director (AD)	M, 38	12 in client relationship management	Local	4
12	Account Director (AD)	F, 43	20 in client relationship management	In-house	3
13	Account Director (AD)	M, 37	14 in client relationship management	Network	4
14	Account Director (AD)	F, 41	18 in account management	Network	5
15	Account Director (AD)	M, 40	19 in client management, 4 with AI	Local	4
16	Digital Marketing Professional (DM)	F, 30	8 in digital marketing	Network	3
17	Digital Marketing Professional (DM)	M, 29	7 in digital marketing	Network	2
18	Digital Marketing Professional (DM)	F, 31	9 in digital marketing	Local	3
19	Digital Marketing Professional (DM)	M, 34	11 in digital marketing	Network	4
20	Digital Marketing Professional (DM)	F, 32	10 in digital marketing, 3 with AI	In-house	3
21	Graphic/Multimedia Designer (MD)	M, 37	14 in graphic/multimedia design	Network	2
22	Graphic/Multimedia Designer (MD)	F, 36	11 in graphic/multimedia design	Local	3
23	Graphic/Multimedia Designer (MD)	M, 34	10 in graphic/multimedia design	Network	2
24	Graphic/Multimedia Designer (MD)	F, 29	8 in multimedia design	Network	2
25	Graphic/Multimedia Designer (MD)	M, 32	9 in graphic/multimedia design, 3 with AI	In-house	3

Source: Own elaboration.

3.4. *Data analysis*

The coding and analysis process followed the systematic approach of Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Gioia *et al.* (2013), enabling a constant comparison of data to identify first-order and second-order concepts, ultimately forming aggregate dimensions. The goal was to reach theoretical saturation, where no new themes emerged, marking the completion of the analysis.

Open coding was the first step, where data was examined closely, staying true to the participants' language to generate first-order concepts. These concepts provided a clear and explicit representation of the most direct patterns in the data. Next, in axial coding, relationships between these first-order concepts were analyzed to form more complex, interconnected categories, known as second-order concepts. This phase deepened the understanding of the data by revealing how different codes were logically related. Finally, selective coding synthesized these second-order concepts into aggregate dimensions, offering the highest level of abstraction. These dimensions captured the broader themes and relationships within the data, connecting them to the study's theoretical framework and research questions.

Throughout, the process was iterative, ensuring that the categories and dimensions were robust and accurately reflected the participants' experiences of how AI impacts creativity in Peruvian advertising agencies.

4. Results

After conducting the descriptive coding process with the obtained data, five main categories emerged: Integration of AI and Creative Advertising, Implementation and Use of AI in Creative Campaigns, Perceptions and Experiences with AI, Ethical and Creative Challenges, and Future Vision of AI in Advertising.

4.1. *Integration of AI and Creative Advertising*

The incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) in the realm of creative advertising has been met with enthusiasm and curiosity by industry professionals, who see significant potential in this technology to revolutionize their practices. In a context where competition is fierce and the need for innovation is constant, AI emerges as a tool that not only optimizes processes but also amplifies human creative capabilities.

4.1.1. Expectations and perceptions

Most professionals interviewed expressed positive expectations regarding how AI can innovate and improve advertising campaigns. This optimism is based on AI's ability to handle large volumes of data, identify complex patterns, and generate insights that were previously inaccessible or very costly to obtain. As one participant noted, "AI lets us analyze customer data in ways we couldn't before, making our campaigns more targeted and effective" (AS#9). AI not only promises greater efficiency in the production and personalization of content but also opens new creative possibilities.

A prominent creative in the sector mentioned that agencies are beginning to use AI for specific tasks such as image generation and time optimization. "We've started using AI to draft initial images, which gives our designers more time to refine and enhance these concepts," explained one creative director (CD#3). These applications allow creative teams to focus on more strategic and conceptual aspects, delegating repetitive and operational tasks to AI algorithms. This optimization of workflow translates into greater efficiency and potentially higher quality of creative output.

4.1.2. Practical applications of AI

One informant highlighted the automation of creative pieces as one of the most immediate and tangible applications of AI in advertising. According to this professional, "AI is enabling us to create personalized ads at scale, adjusting the content based on the preferences and behaviors

of different audience segments” (AD#15). This capability for mass personalization not only improves the relevance of ads but also increases conversion rates and return on investment (ROI).

Another participant emphasized the early implementation of AI for predictive analysis and strategic decision-making. “With AI, we can now predict consumer trends and market behavior much more accurately, allowing us to allocate budgets more effectively and make real-time adjustments to our campaigns,” the specialist explained (DM#17). AI-based predictive models allow agencies to anticipate market changes and adapt their campaigns in real-time, ensuring greater effectiveness and efficiency.

The following table (Table 2) summarizes the initial expectations and actual experiences of AI integration among different professional profiles within the Peruvian advertising industry. It provides insights into how AI has influenced storytelling, efficiency, and creativity across various roles, offering a clear overview of the transformative impact of AI in the advertising process.

Table 2. Initial expectations and experiences of AI integration by professional profile.

Professional profile	Initial expectations	Integration experiences
Creative Directors	Innovate in campaign storytelling	Emerging new forms of storytelling
AI Specialists	Improve personalization and segmentation	Increased campaign efficiency and accuracy
	Predictive analysis and strategic decisions	Use of virtual assistants and analysis of large data volumes
Account Directors	Improve client satisfaction and ROI	Better interpretation of success metrics
Digital Marketing Professionals	Expand reach and engagement	More targeted and effective content strategies
	Automation of creatives	Time and resource savings in content adaptation
Graphic and Multimedia Designers	Generate innovative visual content	Use of AI tools for creative automation

Source: Own elaboration.

4.2. Implementation and use of AI in creative campaigns

From the perspective of the interviewees, the implementation of AI in creative advertising is redefining the industry, providing tools that improve operational efficiency, inspire new ideas, and elevate the quality of visual and auditory content. AI’s ability to generate valuable insights and personalize experiences is transforming how advertising agencies approach their campaigns, taking creativity to new heights and ensuring greater market impact and relevance.

According to the participants, artificial intelligence (AI) is beginning to be implemented in various areas of the creative advertising process, encompassing everything from idea generation to the execution of complete campaigns. The professionals interviewed in this study highlighted how AI has significantly transformed their creative and operational practices, introducing improvements that go beyond simple process optimization and content personalization.

4.2.1. Idea generation

Informants agreed that integrating AI in creative advertising would not be limited to improving operational efficiency. This technology also has the potential to profoundly impact how creatives conceive and develop ideas. As one participant explained, “AI can sift through vast amounts of data and uncover insights that inspire new ideas we might not have considered otherwise” (AS#7).

They also emphasized how AI saves time. “AI can produce high-quality visuals in minutes—something that would take a designer hours, if not days, to create manually” (MD#24). AI tools for image generation can create impactful visuals that would have previously required extensive work by an art director or graphic designer. Another informant noted, “AI can now generate personalized music or voice-overs that truly match the tone and message of the ad, making the experience more engaging for the audience” (CD#5). This capability not only optimizes time and cost but also enhances the overall effectiveness of the advertising message.

4.2.2. Smoother execution

One participant discussed her experience with AI in a recent campaign that blended real recordings with AI-generated elements, showcasing how this technology can enhance both the visual and narrative aspects of content. “This campaign really showed how AI can seamlessly integrate real and artificial elements, which took the quality of the final product to a whole new level,” she noted (AD#12). This campaign exemplifies AI’s ability to cohesively integrate real and artificial elements, elevating the quality of the final product.

Another interviewee emphasized the use of AI to generate realistic graphics in advertising campaigns, resulting in images that consumers cannot distinguish from real photographs. “AI has allowed us to create visuals that are so lifelike, most people can’t even tell they aren’t real photos,” she explained (MD#24). For her, this advancement not only increases the visual quality of campaigns but also intensifies their impact, making ads more attractive and memorable for the target audience.

4.2.3. Cost optimization

One of the interviewed account directors anticipates the use of AI in producing videos that focus on transactional content, allowing the creation of characters and voices through AI. “AI is going to let us create entire characters and voices without needing live actors, which not only cuts down on production costs and time but also gives us way more flexibility and personalization in our video content,” she noted (AD#15). This capability not only significantly reduces production costs and times but also allows for greater flexibility and personalization in video content, better adapting to the audience’s needs and preferences.

Similarly, an AI specialist highlighted the early implementation of AI for predictive analysis and strategic decision-making. “By using AI to predict consumer trends and market behavior, we’re able to personalize campaigns much more effectively and really hit the mark with our messaging,” he explained (AS#7). By using AI-based predictive models, agencies can analyze consumer trends and market behavior with greater precision, thus optimizing the personalization and effectiveness of campaigns. This strategic use of AI allows for a deeper understanding of consumer behavior, resulting in more tailored and effective advertising campaigns.

The following table (Table 3) summarizes how different professional profiles have utilized AI to enhance creativity in their respective roles and the changes observed in the creative processes since the integration of AI.

Table 3. Use of AI and changes in the creative process.

Professional profile	Use of AI to enhance creativity	Changes in the creative process
Creative Directors	Implementation of AI tools for idea generation	Agility and diversity in concept creation
AI Specialists	Development of algorithms for predictive consumer analysis	Real-time data influencing decision-making
	Predictive analysis and strategic decisions	Improved personalization and campaign effectiveness
Account Directors	Use of AI for client strategy personalization	Strategies more tailored to consumer needs
	Production of transactional videos	Cost and time savings in video production
Digital Marketing Professionals	AI for audience segmentation automation	More targeted and behavior-based marketing
Graphic and Multimedia Designers	AI tools for automated design and animation	Increased visual production and experimentation
	Generation of realistic graphics	Results so realistic that consumers cannot distinguish them from photographs

Source: Own elaboration.

4.3. Positive future projections for AI

Overall perceptions of the use of AI in advertising were mostly positive, though they varied by professional profile and individual experiences of the interviewees. This variability reflected the different ways AI was integrated and perceived within the creative and operational processes of advertising agencies.

The interviewees highlighted how AI significantly influenced the effectiveness of advertising campaigns, particularly in terms of consumer engagement and commercial results. For example, a digital marketing professional observed that the use of AI in advertising strategies has significantly improved conversion efficiency. This demonstrates a positive return on investment in AI technology, as it allows for better targeting and personalization of advertising messages, increasing the likelihood of favorable consumer responses.

A creative director shared that his team holds positive views about using AI to optimize processes. “AI has made our content production much more efficient,” he reported (CD#11). “It’s freed us up to focus on more strategic, creative work rather than getting bogged down with operational tasks. The way AI automates repetitive tasks and processes data in real-time is really changing how we manage and execute our campaigns.” From his perspective, the automation of repetitive tasks and AI’s ability to analyze large volumes of data in real-time will transform how advertising campaigns are managed and executed.

4.3.1. Evangelization and adaptation

An account director highlighted the phase of evangelization and adaptation that many companies are currently undergoing when adopting AI. “A lot of companies are in this phase where they’re learning how to effectively use AI,” the account director explained (AD#3). “It’s not just

about bringing in new technology—it's also about shifting the company culture to really embrace what AI can do." This adaptation process involves not only the integration of new technologies but also a cultural shift within organizations to embrace and fully leverage AI capabilities.

An AI specialist emphasized the importance of continuous training and education to maximize AI's potential. "Keeping up with the latest in AI is key," he noted (AS#7). "In my experience with implementing virtual assistants and predictive analysis, I've seen firsthand how these tools can significantly boost the personalization and effectiveness of campaigns. But to make the most of them, teams need ongoing training to stay up-to-date and use AI efficiently." Continuous training will be crucial to keep teams updated with the latest technologies and practices, ensuring they can use AI efficiently and ethically.

4.3.2. Impact on consumer engagement

Improvement in consumer engagement is one of the most frequently mentioned benefits of AI in advertising by the participants. For them, AI tools facilitate more dynamic and personalized interactions with consumers, adapting advertising messages not only to general audience interests but also to their specific real-time behaviors. "AI lets us tailor messages to what people are actually doing in real-time, which helps create a stronger connection with the brand," explained one participant (DM#20). This instant adaptability would translate into a stronger emotional and cognitive connection with the brand, increasing the likelihood of conversion and long-term loyalty.

One of the participants detailed that by analyzing consumer behavior patterns and preferences, AI can help create highly personalized ads that connect more deeply with target audiences. "When we use AI to really dig into consumer behavior, we're able to craft ads that resonate on a personal level," he noted (DM#17). "This kind of personalization doesn't just make the ads more relevant—it actually makes interacting with the brand more enjoyable and meaningful for the consumer." This personalization would not only increase the relevance of the advertising message but also enhance the user experience, making the interaction with the brand more enjoyable and meaningful.

4.3.3. Improved commercial results

From a commercial results perspective, account directors agreed that AI has proven to be a powerful tool for optimizing return on investment (ROI). "AI lets us get a lot more bang for our buck by targeting our ads more precisely and personalizing them more effectively," one account director explained (AD#15). By allowing for more precise segmentation and more effective personalization, AI enhances the efficiency and impact of advertising campaigns, ultimately driving better financial outcomes.

AI helps maximize the impact of every dollar spent on advertising. The interviewees noted that AI-integrated campaigns not only tend to be more cost-efficient but also achieve better results in key metrics such as click-through rate (CTR), conversion rate, and customer lifetime value (CLV).

Table 4. Future projections with AI.

Professional profile	General perceptions of AI	Post-implementation experiences
Creative Directors	Hope that AI will generate novel concepts	Greater speed and originality in concept development
	Positive perceptions within the team	Optimization of processes and time
AI Specialists	Belief in optimizing targeting and personalization	Confirmation of increased campaign accuracy
	Continuous training	Implementation of virtual assistants and predictive analysis
Account Directors	Prediction of a better cost-benefit ratio for clients	Observation of greater client satisfaction
	Optimization of ROI	More precise segmentation and more effective personalization
Digital Marketing Professionals	Expectation of more dynamic campaigns	Experience of more interactive and personalized campaigns
	Improved conversion efficiency	Optimization of AI-powered ads on Google and Meta
Graphic and Multimedia Designers	Anticipation of new creative possibilities	Effective use of AI for creating visual content

Source: Own elaboration.

4.4. Ethical challenges in AI implementation

While perceptions of AI in advertising are predominantly positive and highlight its numerous benefits in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, it is also essential to address the ethical and operational challenges that come with its implementation. “The key to long-term success is finding the right balance –leveraging AI’s advantages while preserving human creativity and ensuring consumer privacy,” noted one participant (CD#4). The key to long-term success lies in finding an appropriate balance that maximizes the technological advantages of AI while preserving human integrity and creativity, ensuring consumer privacy and respect at the same time.

Despite the numerous advantages, the integration of AI in creative advertising presents significant challenges, particularly in terms of ethics and authenticity. The automation of creativity raises questions about the originality of AI-generated content and the role of human creatives in this process. “When AI starts creating content, we have to ask ourselves–where does originality come from, and how do we ensure that human creatives aren’t sidelined?” remarked a creative director (CD#3). Additionally, the use of personal data for ad personalization must be handled carefully to protect consumer privacy and comply with legal regulations. A digital marketing specialist mentioned the ethical challenges of a campaign she participated in, where the use of AI sparked a discussion about copyright and ethics in artistic content creation (DM#20).

4.4.1. Data management and transparent policies

It is crucial for agencies to develop clear and transparent policies on the use of AI and data management, ensuring a proper balance between technological innovation and ethical responsibility. “We need to be upfront about how we’re using AI and managing data,” noted a digital marketing professional (DM#20). “There’s always a tension between wanting to personalize ads and respecting consumer privacy and finding that balance is key.” Another participant highlighted the challenges in processing large volumes of data with AI, which can affect the effectiveness of marketing strategies and customer service. “AI is great at handling data, but there are still limitations when it comes to processing huge amounts quickly and accurately, and that can sometimes impact how effective our strategies are,” he explained (AS#9).

4.4.2. Need for a legal and responsible framework

A brand director and an AI specialist both agreed on the importance of using AI responsibly and ethically, emphasizing the need for an adequate legal framework to guide its implementation in advertising. “We need a solid legal framework to make sure our AI-driven advertising practices are not just effective but also ethical and respectful of consumer rights,” said the brand director (AD#12). A robust legal framework would ensure that advertising practices are not only effective but also ethical and respectful of consumer rights. Moreover, they stressed that this framework must be flexible enough to adapt to rapid technological advancements and changes in marketing practices. “It’s crucial that any legal guidelines we follow are adaptable, so they can keep up with the fast pace of technological change in marketing,” added the AI specialist (AS#7).

4.4.3. Balancing automation and human creativity

It was evident that there is an ongoing debate about balancing automation and human creativity. While AI can optimize processes and generate personalized content efficiently, some professionals fear that an over-reliance on technology might reduce the authenticity and originality of creative work. “AI is great for crunching data and speeding up tasks, but at the end of the day, it’s the human touch that brings authenticity to our work,” noted one creative director (CD#5). This is a critical point, especially for creative directors, who value spontaneity and human intuition in the creative process. AI’s ability to analyze data and generate content should be complemented by human creativity and judgment to ensure that the results are authentic and meaningful.

The following table (Table 5) captures both the ethical challenges that arose with the use of AI in creative advertising and the perceived effects of AI in enhancing or limiting creativity across different professional roles.

Table 5. Ethical dilemmas and impact of AI on creativity.

Professional profile	Identified ethical dilemmas	Impact on creativity
Creative Directors	Concerns about authenticity and creative ownership	Increased creative possibilities, greater variety of concepts
AI Specialists	Discussions about data transparency	Improvements in consumer insights to inform creativity
	Need for an adequate legal framework	Continuous training for responsible use of AI
Account Directors	Tensions in representing AI to clients	Creation of more personalized and effective campaigns
	Responsibility in the use of AI	Importance of ethics and differentiation in the use of AI
Digital Marketing Professionals	Concerns about privacy and segmentation	More focused campaigns with higher engagement
	Data processing limitations	Need to balance data volume with AI capabilities
Graphic and Multimedia Designers	Ethics in automated content generation	Innovations in graphic design and content production
	Use of AI in an art campaign generated ethical discussion	Debate on the appropriate use of AI in sensitive categories

Source: Own elaboration.

4.5. Future vision of AI in advertising

The professionals interviewed generally expressed a positive vision for the future of AI in advertising. They anticipated that AI would continue to play a crucial role in optimizing and personalizing advertising campaigns, while emphasizing the importance of an ethical approach and the need for continuous training.

One of the account directors foresees that as agencies better understand the tangible benefits of AI, they will be more willing to invest in advanced technologies. “Once agencies really grasp how much AI can improve their results, they’re going to be more inclined to invest in these technologies,” noted the account director (AD#15). According to one of the creative directors, the future of AI in advertising will depend on professionals’ ability to balance technological innovation with ethical and creative judgment. “The key to AI’s future in our industry is finding the right balance between pushing technological boundaries and maintaining strong ethical and creative standards,” the creative director explained (CD#4).

Additionally, one of the multimedia designers highlighted the production of AI-generated videos as an emerging trend that could significantly transform transactional advertising. “We’re starting to see AI-generated videos really take off, and this could be a game-changer for transactional ads,” noted the multimedia designer (MD#18). Finally, one of the AI specialists stressed the need for an appropriate legal and ethical framework to guide AI implementation, along with the importance of continuous education and training to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of campaigns.

The following table (Table 6) provides a comprehensive overview of future expectations for AI integration in the advertising industry, along with practical recommendations based on the insights and experiences of professionals from various specializations. It underscores the necessity for preparation, continuous training, and strategic adaptation to technological advancements in AI. By highlighting AI's potential to enhance creative and strategic processes in advertising, the table emphasizes the importance of leveraging AI's capabilities while maintaining ethical standards and fostering human creativity.

Table 6. Future projections and recommendations for AI integration.

Professional profile	Future projections	Recommendations for AI integration
Creative Directors	AI as a standard tool in campaign creation	Foster AI-human collaboration to enhance creativity
	AI optimizing time and resources	Promote the use of AI for specific and repetitive tasks
AI Specialists	Advances in personalization and targeting	Invest in training and skills development in AI
	Strategic decision-making with AI	Establish an appropriate legal and ethical framework
Account Directors	AI improving cost-benefit ratio of campaigns	Develop clear metrics to measure AI impact
	Increased investment in advanced technologies	Educate on the tangible benefits of AI
Digital Marketing Professionals	AI as a key component in marketing strategies	Integrate AI in all phases of digital marketing for optimization
Graphic and Multimedia Designers	Growing use of AI in automating repetitive tasks	Adopt AI for experimentation and efficiency in design
	Production of videos with AI	Continuous training and standardization of processes

Source: Own elaboration.

5. Discussion and conclusions

The results show that AI implementation in creative advertising has had a significant and positive impact. AI enhances efficiency in content production, enables more precise campaign personalization, and optimizes operational processes (Iyer & Bright, 2024; Feng & Chen, 2022). Ethical and creative challenges, however, also emerge and demand attention (González-Esteban & Sanahuja-Sanahuja, 2023; Tamarit, 2023).

Professionals emphasize AI's ability to manage large data volumes and generate valuable insights. This capability has allowed for large-scale personalized content creation, enhancing campaign relevance and effectiveness. Additionally, AI supports predictive analysis and strategic decision-making, improving budget allocation (Lee, 2022).

Ethical concerns tied to AI in advertising are significant. The automation of creativity raises questions about the originality of AI-generated content and the role of human creatives (Wu & Wen, 2021). Furthermore, careful handling of personal data is crucial to safeguard consumer privacy (Corrêa *et al.*, 2023).

These findings align with existing literature, highlighting AI's potential to transform advertising and marketing. Similar to prior studies, AI has improved campaign visual quality and personalization (Xu *et al.*, 2023; Lee *et al.*, 2023). AI's implementation in creative advertising has proven beneficial for content production and campaign personalization, helping agencies better adapt to consumer behavior (Iyer & Bright, 2024; Feng & Chen, 2022).

This study also examines AI's influence on creativity in Peruvian advertising agencies, addressing the research question: "How is AI affecting creativity in Peruvian advertising agencies, and what is its projection for the future?" The findings suggest that AI not only optimizes creative processes but also introduces challenges requiring a balance between technological innovation and ethical considerations. The future impact of AI will depend on how well agencies integrate it while preserving human creativity.

AI is increasingly implemented across various stages of the creative process, from idea generation to full campaign execution. Professionals noted that AI has transformed their practices, offering improvements beyond process optimization and personalization. This includes analyzing large datasets to inspire new creative directions (Abdelmissih, 2023; Miklavčič, 2023).

The study also emphasizes ethical challenges that were less highlighted in previous research. These include originality of AI-generated content, the role of human creativity, and privacy protection when using personal data (Wu & Wen, 2021; Corrêa *et al.*, 2023). As AI adoption expands, addressing these concerns responsibly is crucial (Tamarit, 2023; Camilleri, 2024). Additionally, establishing a legal framework and clear policies is essential to ensure that advertising remains effective and ethical (González-Esteban & Sanahuja-Sanahuja, 2023).

These findings expand existing theories by incorporating ethical considerations and highlighting the importance of continuous training, thus enriching the debate on the integration of advanced technology in creative practices (Lee, 2022; He *et al.*, 2024). Thus, while AI has the potential to transform the advertising industry, its successful implementation will depend on a careful balance between technology and ethics, as well as continuous adaptation to emerging practices and evolving regulations (Fioravante, 2024; Kaur *et al.*, 2024).

This study has some limitations, including a limited sample size and a selection of interviews focused on specific advertising professionals in Peru. These limitations may affect the generalizability of the results to other contexts and markets (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015; Daymon & Holloway, 2010).

Future research could explore the implementation of AI in advertising in different cultural contexts and markets to compare perceptions and results. Additionally, longitudinal studies could examine the long-term impact of AI on creative advertising and how ethics and regulations evolve around its use (He *et al.*, 2024; Camilleri, 2024). Further research should also address the barriers and facilitators for AI adoption in companies of different sizes and sectors.

This research contributes to understanding the impact of AI on creative advertising, highlighting both its benefits in terms of efficiency and personalization and the ethical challenges it poses. The integration of AI in advertising campaigns has proven to be a powerful tool for innovation, but its use must be managed responsibly and ethically. AI has the potential to transform the advertising industry, but its successful implementation will depend on a careful balance between technology and ethics. Continuous education and the adaptation of advertising practices will be crucial to fully leverage the benefits of AI while mitigating its risks. Collaboration between humans and machines promises to take creative advertising to new heights, as long as a balanced and responsible approach is maintained (Gil de Zúñiga *et al.*, 2024).

Advertising agencies and marketing professionals are encouraged to adopt AI technologies with a strategic and ethical approach. It is crucial to invest in team training and establish clear

guidelines for the responsible use of AI. Policymakers should also develop regulatory frameworks that ensure transparency and protect consumer rights in the use of AI in advertising.

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