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LINDA POPHAL

What Content Creators (Still) Have to Offer That AI Can't Touch

Generative AI (gen AI) burst onto the scene in late 2022 and upended the world of content marketing as we knew it. As both individuals and organizations began to experiment with—and then use—gen AI tools to create both written and visual content, creators began to panic. And for apparently good reasons: As content marketing company Skyword tells us, “By mid-2025, 90% of marketers are expected to use [gen AI] for content creation, up from 55% today.” That uptick in adoption can't help but impact the demand for human content creators. But even in this disruptive environment, some content creators are thriving—and expect to continue to do so as they learn to adapt to, and adopt, gen AI. Here's a roundup of their thoughts on the matter.

THE TROUBLE WITH GEN AI

“It's called generative for a reason,” says Anniston Ward, marketing manager at Metricool, a social media management platform. Gen AI, she points out, is “bound to a finite set of rules for mass production and reproduction.” Margot Bloomstein takes this criticism a step further. “It's more accurate to call it regurgitative than generative,” she says. Bloomstein is a graduate-level lecturer, consultant, and author, as well as the principal of Appropriate, Inc., a brand and content strategy consultancy. “The large language models [LLMs] that fuel gen AI consume and reassemble only content that already exists. Unlike human content creators, no gen AI tool has the imagination to think beyond what's already been published, or consider the accuracy or authorial bias of what it consumes,” Bloomstein says. “These limitations mean LLMs eventually consume content they created, raising the threat of model collapse.”

Doyle Albee, CEO of Comprise, a digital marketing agency, says he considers gen AI to be “a great brainstorming partner and an OK editor.” But, he notes, when asked to develop copy from scratch, “it's not great.” Albee shares the results of an experiment he did, asking gen AI to write a news release based on spec sheets from Best Buy's website. “The result was a C+ for a freshman PR student,” he says. “It certainly looked and read like a news release, but it was not anything that would interest a reporter.” Albee uses a unique perspective to describe the value—or lack of—that gen AI tools can provide. “If I purchased your car from you, we could ask an AI bot to develop a contract



skyword.com/contentstandard/genais-impact-on-content-creation-key-insights-for-2025

for us. If neither of us is an attorney, it would likely look pretty good,” he notes. “However, when I miss several payments and you call an actual attorney, there would likely be issues that could cause you real problems in collection and enforcement.”

“Where many brands go wrong with gen AI is failing to verify facts or legal issues, especially copyright,” says Anniston Ward. “Not only does this mislead audiences, it can affect a brand's reputation.” AI-generated content, Ward adds, often fails to match a brand's typical tone. Worse, Bloomstein asserts, there's “no sense of humility or ethics [that] prevents AI from making up content even if that content may perpetuate dangerous or misleading information.” While proving to be a useful aid and a great option for streamlining many content creation processes, gen AI isn't ready to be used without human oversight.

WHAT HUMAN WRITERS CAN (UNIQUELY) DO

When Brooke Browne, marketing director at Smartbridge, a digital enablement and business consulting firm, first started using gen AI, she “incorrectly used it to replace [her] work.” But Browne found that it was “creating dry, repetitive and commonplace content.” Since those early days of experimentation, she's learned to be a better prompt engineer—using gen AI to support, rather than create, her content. “I find that gen AI is great at filling in the blanks, inspiring starting points, and smoothing out stories,” she says.

People aren't just looking for information, claims Jake Ward, a digital entrepreneur and online marketing professional with Kleo, a browser extension that helps users create and consume

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content. Content consumers are "looking for connection, for personality, for a sense of who they're engaging with." That, he says, continues to give human content creators an edge—and that's also why Ward's "not too worried about AI completely taking over this space."

In an article for *Harvard Business Review*, Marc Zao-Sanders, CEO and co-founder of Filtered, a company that develops algorithmic technology, points to some areas in which AI may be poised to excel, as well as some areas in which humans still have an edge. "We don't know which domains AI will dominate next, but candidates include fully autonomous ... driving, surgery, writing a bestselling book, developing AI systems themselves, and the holy grail: artificial general intelligence (AGI). ..." AGI, Zao-Sanders writes, refers to "AI achieving human-level proficiency across a wide range of cognitive tasks." But, he continues, at least for now, humans have an edge over AI when it comes to emotion, complexity, physicality, and creativity. People have ample opportunity to leverage these tools to create efficiencies and streamline content creation processes while ensuring the ethical use of AI technology.

HOW CREATORS ARE LEVERAGING GEN AI RESPONSIBLY

The responsibility of content creators, according to Browne, "is to ensure that you are creating more value and not just parroting what's already out there." When someone reads Smartbridge's blog, for instance, Browne expects "that they find it valuable because of the added personal anecdotes and experience."

"Currently, gen AI is being used by creators as an aid rather than as a substitute," says Jake Ward. "It can serve as a good starting point, but much more rewriting, editing, and adding will be necessary to give the content a genuine feel. It's the difference between a post that gets scrolled past and one that sparks a conversation. And honestly, that's what people are looking for online—conversations, not just information dumps."

Browne adds, "I believe being a good prompt engineer means using gen AI to set you up to create your own voice and perspective. For example, I don't just ask it to summarize a report. I

ask, 'Did the report say anything negative about the platform? What would I tell a friend was the one most surprising fact that came out of the report? Did they say anything contradictory to their previous reporting years?'"

"Over the next few years, I don't see demand for content creators going away. If anything, it's going to evolve," says Jake Ward. "As more content becomes AI-generated, the stuff that's actually human is going to stand out even more. I think we'll see more creators building communities around their personal brands, using AI as an assistant, not as a substitute."

"We use AI now for some of our content creation and it still requires a heavy edit from humans to make sure it ticks all the boxes for the client," says Kaylene Grieve, managing director of Sales, SEO & Social Media, a digital marketing agency. While businesses may assume they can use these tools to create content on their own, without external assistance, Grieve thinks this is likely to change. "[T]hat will turn around once they realize the time it still takes to put all the elements together before the content is released to the public," she says. Agencies, Grieve predicts, will still have an edge when it comes to content creation.

Robin Samora, a marketing and PR consultant, agrees. "Humans need to humanize content," she states. "Even if an AI tool has been trained, it still takes time to rewrite the copy." Samora feels that the future for content creators is bright, particularly over the next 1–3 years: "Those that have the experience and knowhow to write and train the gen AI model are able to experiment with a number of projects and flourish."



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