

Experimenting with AI to Optimize B2B Content: Making Bold Bets Pay Off

Phyllis Davidson
VP, Principal Analyst

Opticon, October 12, 2023

BOLD
AT
WORK

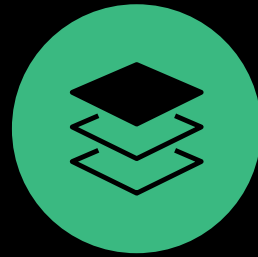
Buyers say vendor content fails to deliver value

Technology-buyer research shows that B2B organizations need to improve content experiences by delivering less content while focusing on higher quality, uniqueness, and relevance.



59%

“The material is **extraneous**. I get my info from other sources.”



50%

“Vendors give me **too much material**.”



53%

“Much of the material that vendors share with me is **useless**.”



64%

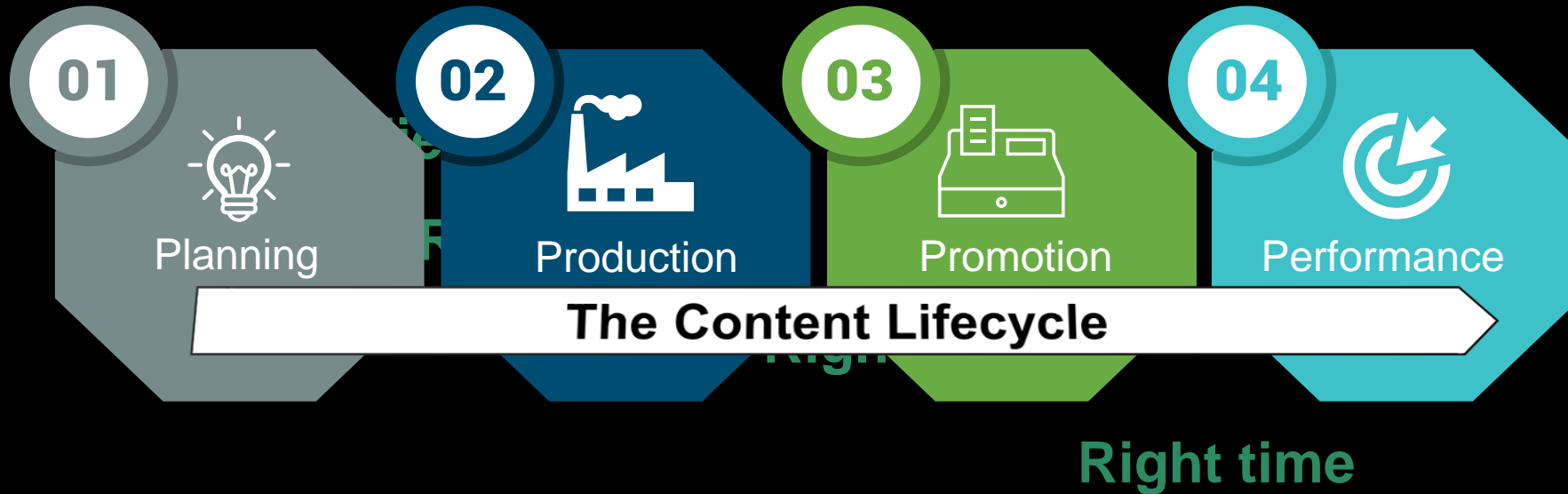
Much of the material is biased toward the vendor.

77%

of customers are unlikely to expand contracts
if content isn't valuable or helpful

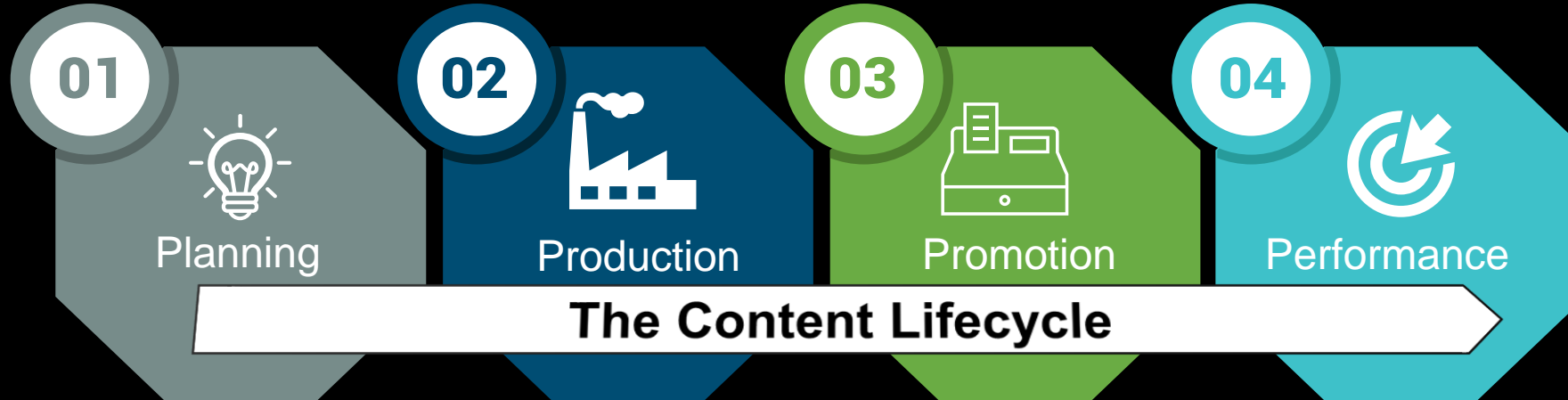
B2B organizations struggle to get content “right”

The four R's – the aphorism so familiar to marketers – continue to elude most businesses, because the content lifecycle is rife with challenges that prevent teams from achieving it.



B2B organizations struggle to get content “right”

The four R's – the aphorism so familiar to marketers – continue to elude most businesses, because the content lifecycle is rife with challenges that prevent teams from achieving it.



- No strategic planning or siloed approaches
- Not audience-focused

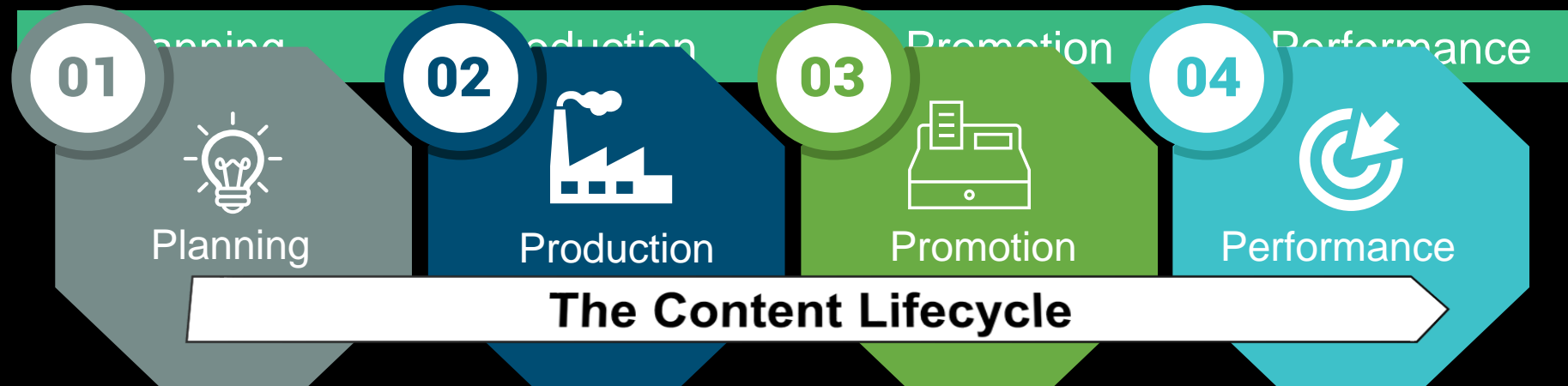
- Manual processes that don't scale
- Lack of coordination and prioritization

- Limited personalization and customization
- Fragmented view of audience interactions

- Content and data chaos
- Lack of automation, tech integration, and visibility

Applying AI across the content lifecycle

B2B organizations working to optimize the customer experience recognize the need to experiment with technologies that leverage AI to automate, generate, tune, and analyze their content.



- Briefs, calendars
- Persona generation
- Competitive analysis

- Draft and personalize short- / long-form content
- Creative assets
- Derivatives from primary assets
- Workflow automation
- Translation and localization

- Promotional and social copy
- Search/SEO
- Personalized, orchestrated experiences
- Channel optimization
- Content recommendations
- Sales enablement

- Metadata, taxonomy, and inventory management
- Performance data analysis
- Predictive analytics

Bridging the gap between the current and future state of AI

B2B organizations were in the early stage of AI adoption when generative AI took center stage. Now, the quest for competitive, low-risk, high-value AI use is on.

39% say modular content, automation, and AI are a top focus to enable content customization at scale¹

Only **3%** use AI-generated copy and only **2%** use AI-generated content briefs²

22% have implemented content workflow automation in the past 12 months³

THEN

FUTURE

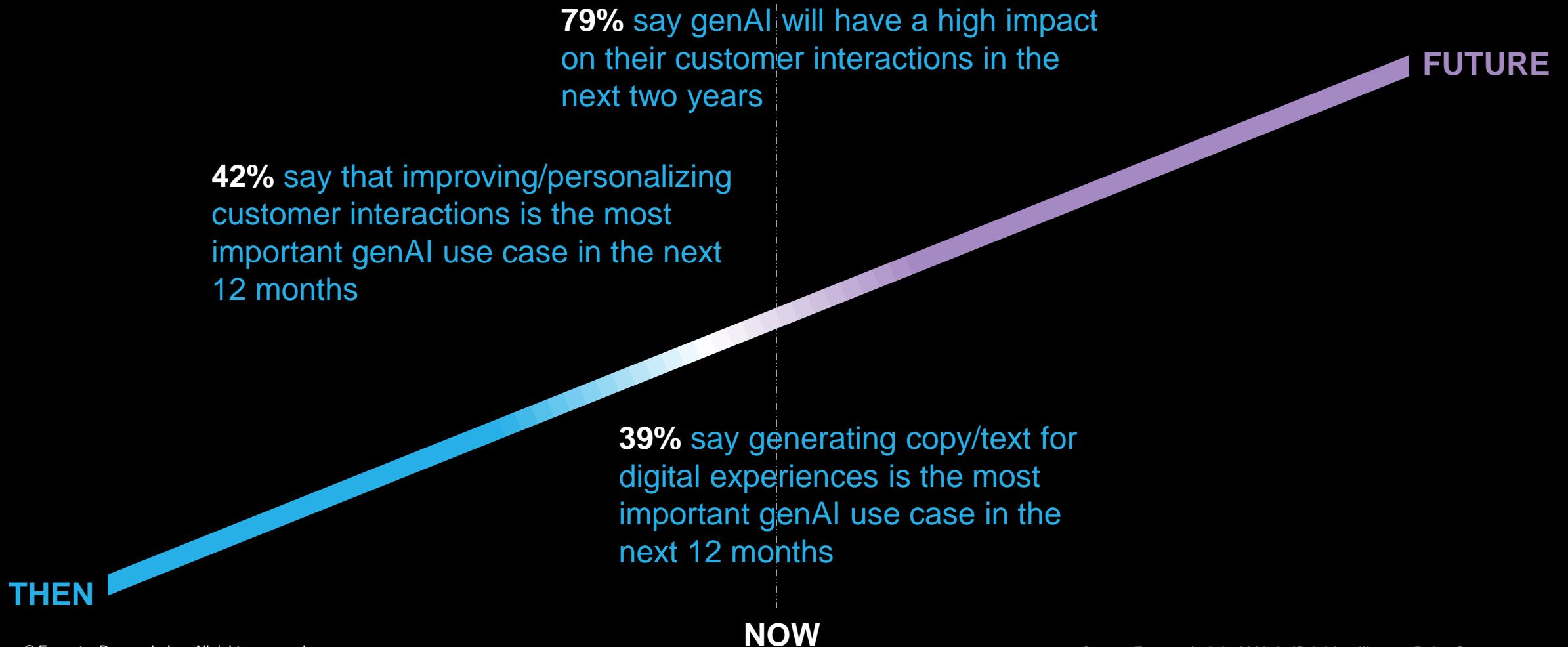
1. Base: 92 B2B marketing decision-makers who have management authority on content strategy and operations and focus to support new markets as a top growth strategy; Source: Forrester's Marketing Survey, 2022

2. Base: 133 B2B marketing professionals; Source: Forrester's 2022 State Of B2B Content Survey

3. Base: 511 demand/account-based marketers; Source: Forrester's 2021 State Of Demand And ABM Tactic Survey, 2021

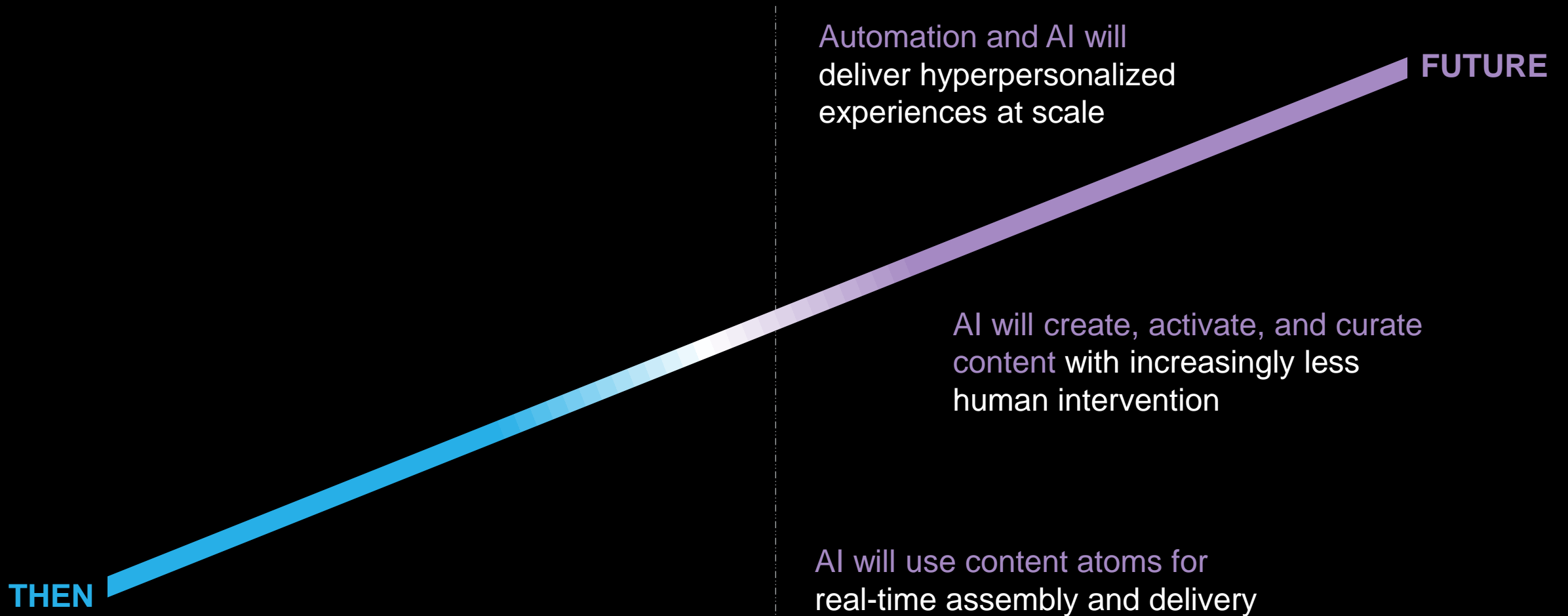
Bridging the gap between the current and future state of AI

Marketers are at an inflection point, moving from consideration to action.



Bridging the gap between the current and future state of AI

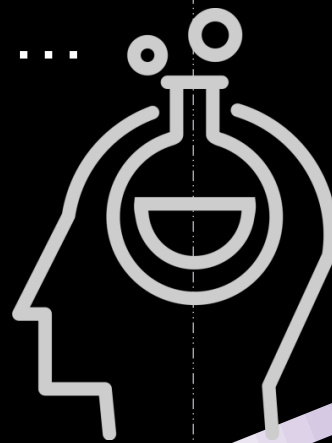
B2B organizations were in the early stage of AI adoption when generative AI took center stage. Now, the quest for competitive, low-risk, high-value AI use is on.



Bridging the gap between the current and future state of AI

Organizations that adopt or expand marketing experiments further into the offer stack, including the content lifecycle, will have a competitive advantage.

“Experimentation ...

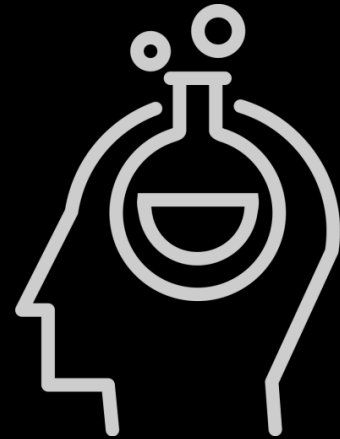


FUTURE

.... is the least arrogant method of gaining knowledge.”

Isaac Asimov
Author and scientist

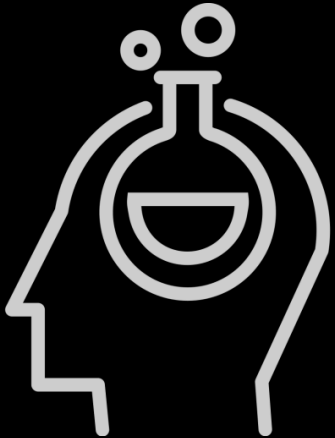
THEN



Bringing the power of experimentation to content

While experimentation may be integral to an organization's marketing, it is less commonly applied to the content lifecycle, but the time to start doing so is now.

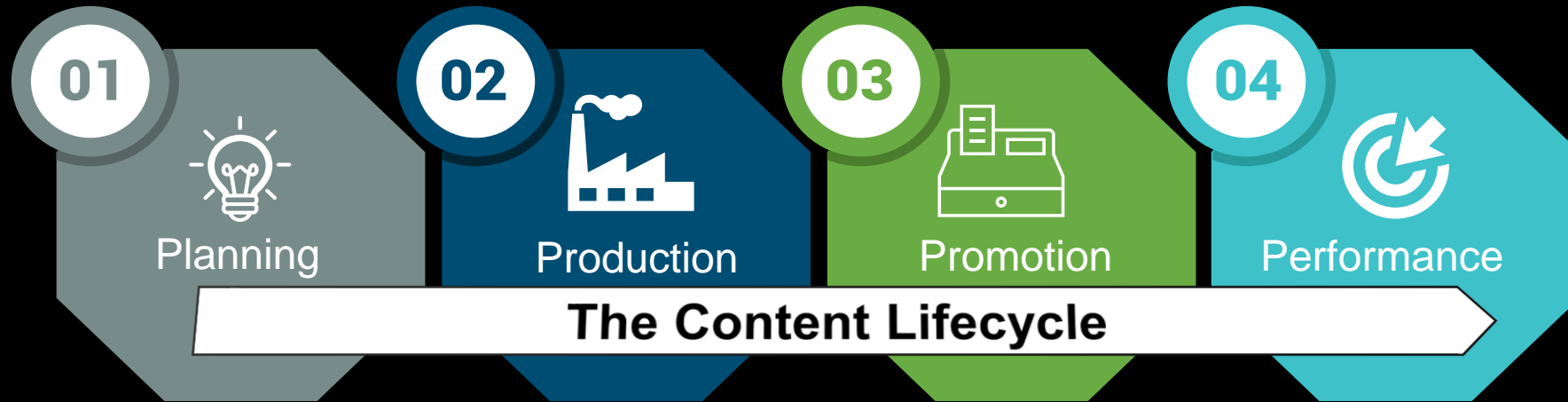
Content experiments:



- Bring personalization the last mile
- Can be self-scaling
- Are more likely to be “pilots” that take longer
- Include more stakeholders
- May be part of integrated work streams

Applying experimentation to the content lifecycle

Experimentation may be a new muscle. Use a methodical, repeatable approach; clarify roles and responsibilities for cross-functional stakeholders; and leverage existing project momentum.



How can I use AI to inform content strategy and build calendars?

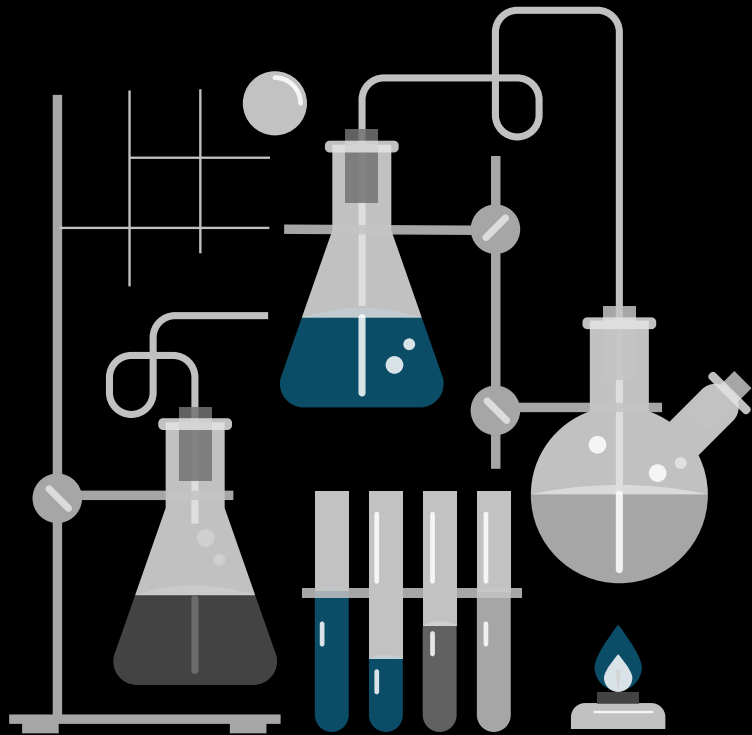
Can I scale content production of images and text effectively with GenAI?

Can I auto-create promotional banners with regional images?

Can I use AI to autotag content, improve curation, and surface engagement trends?

Applying the scientific method

The process of objectively establishing facts through testing adds experimentation rigor to business.



1. Ask a question

Will AI-generated industry versions of a white paper perform better than the generic version?

2. Research

Evaluate differences in knowledge requirements & preferences.

3. Formulate a hypothesis

AI-generated fin services and life-sciences versions delivered in same channels will perform 10% better.

4. Make a plan

Use outbound email to test versions against industry audience members.

5. Experiment

Run test with list subsets, using the same parameters/timing. Performance = download.

6. Collect & record results

Compare results across all versions.

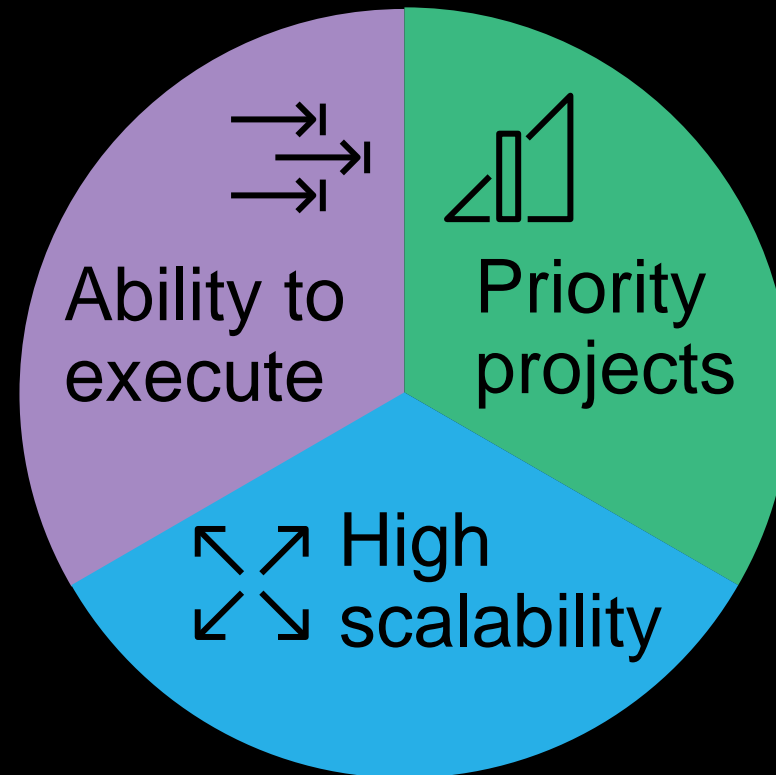
7. Draw conclusions

Fin services met KPI; life sciences did not. Run fin services; eval input for life sciences; consider testing a third industry.

Qualifying content experiments

Work a click down in the success rubric to qualify proposed experiments. Develop a short list and prioritize based on a combination of near- and longer-term wins.

- Do we have the right people/resources?
Cross-functional support?
- Do we have the technology/process today? Can we get there?



- Does it align to priorities that have executive sponsorship?
- Can experiment goals be met on time?
- Is there budget to support?

- What are next steps to scale if results are positive?
- What are KPIs associated with initial scalability milestones?
- What are the technical investment implications of scale?

Content Experimentation Examples

- Check Point
- HCL
- IBM





Generative AI and Experimentation at Check Point Software Technologies

Sean Mattson
Head of Digital Strategies and Operations

Example of supporting local CPXs and physical events with geo targeting



7.3% CTR
74 add't'l reg

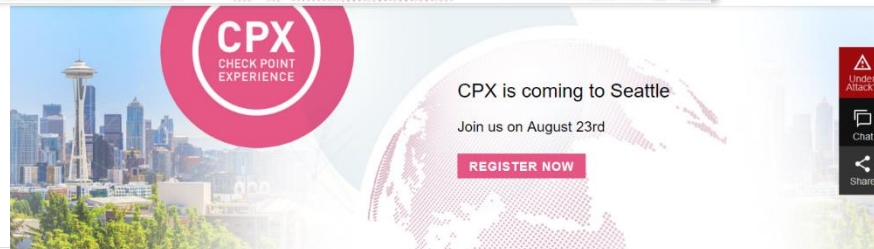
2 languages



6.8% CTR



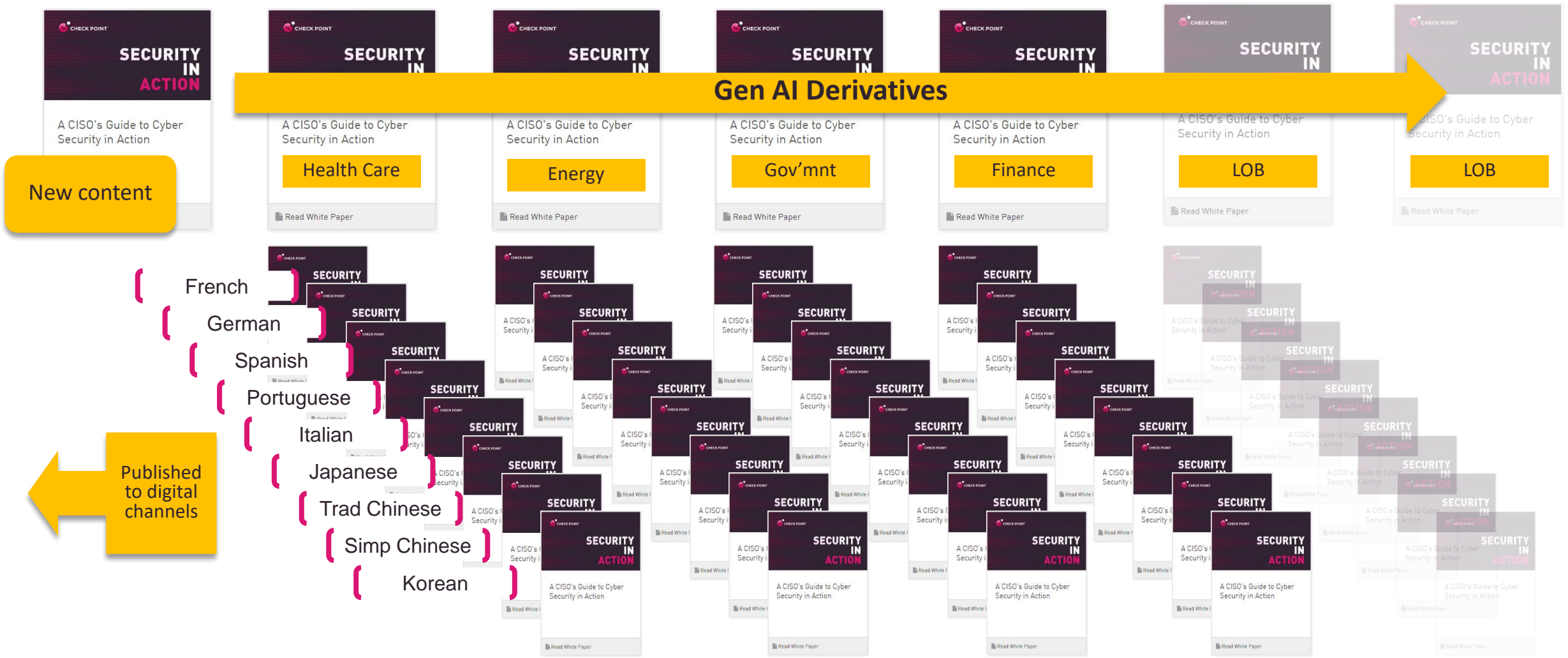
3.6% CTR
8 add't'l reg



4.0% CTR
15 add't'l reg

Geo targeting provided greater visibility and added organic registrations

Example – Single asset with 40x increase in reach



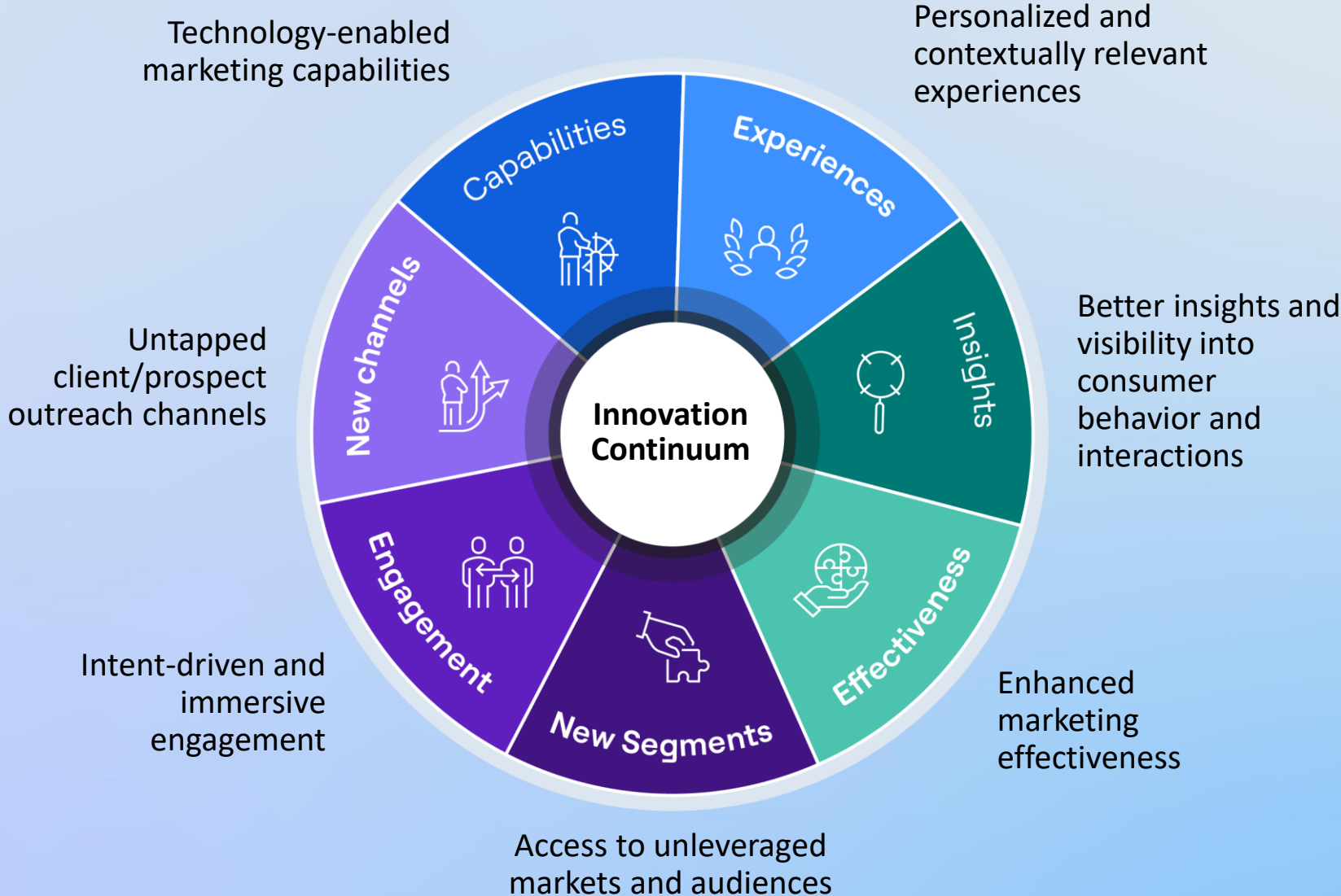
Unlocking the power of Generative AI for vertical marketing



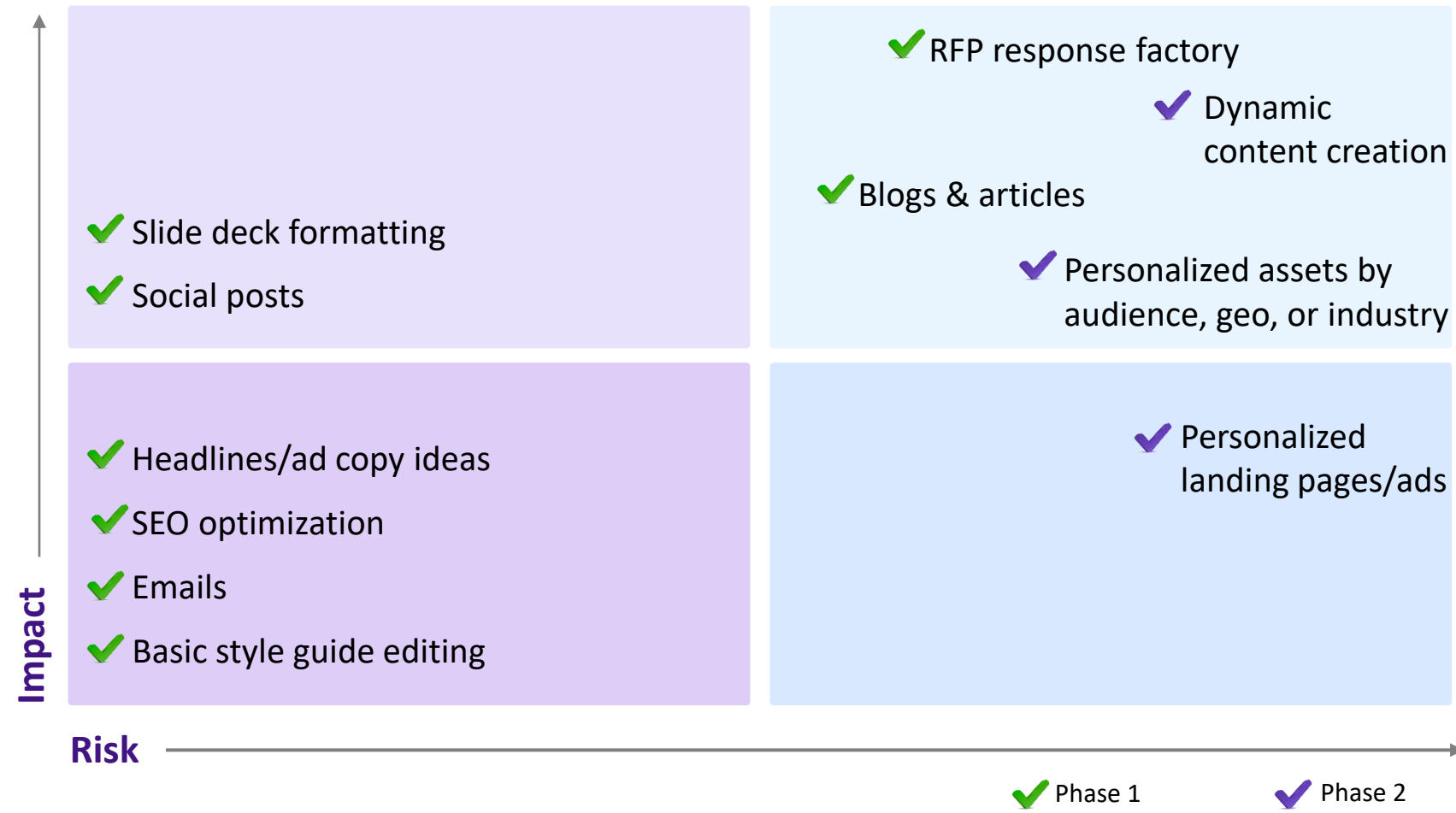
Shimona Chadra
Vertical Marketing Head, HCLTech

HCL's culture of experimentation

7 pillars of innovation framework



Pilot projects identified for HCLTech vertical marketing



Use case: Enhancing email content; driving up human productivity

Human draft

Sub: Explore how 5G is enabling better customer experience across industries

Human follow-up email

Sub: Let's take you on a journey to theme parks of the future

Hi ABC,

Trust you are doing well!

In the last mail, you discovered how 5G is enabling theme parks to offer futuristic services.

Let us take you on a journey of a 5G enable theme park of the future, [here](#).

5G has the potential to transform customer experience—making it more integrated, seamless, and enjoyable.

At [HCLTech](#), we aim to enable a 5G-ready world with limitless possibilities.

Write back and we can discuss more in detail about our 5G offerings for various industries that are transforming customer experience for businesses.

Regards,

Content enhanced by generative AI

Sub: Explore endless opportunities with 5G

AI generated follow-up email

Sub: An Incredible Theme Park Adventure Explores the Possibilities

Hi ABC,

Hope you're doing well.

Discover a future 5G theme park

5G transforms customer experience we enable a limitless, 5G-ready

Reply and find out more about businesses with improved custo

Regards,

Generative AI subject line
open rate

12%

Tech.
forming

Sample Subject lines

Campaign Name	Human	GI sample 1	GI Sample 2
5G Monetization	Monetize your 5G investments	Accelerate 5G investment returns today	Maximize your 5G investments: Industry 4.

Human-generated subject
line open rate

13%

nts count

Use case: Social posts from email copy; nurture email sequence from whitepaper



in Lin
Get
futu
enjo
sma
Let's
expe
#Th
#im

HCLTech | Supercharging Progress™

Digital transformation in theme parks

Enhancing the theme park experience in the post-pandemic world through 5G.



Click the above image to view the theme park whitepaper

in L
H
Th
ch
ex
te
an
#T
Ca

Email 1: Subject: The Magic of Theme Parks

Hello!

Are you a fan of theme parks? If so, you'll want to check out our latest whitepaper on theme park design and operations. Discover what makes theme parks so magical and how they create immersive experiences for visitors. [Click here](#) to read the whitepaper now.

Email 2: Subject: Storytelling in Theme Park Design

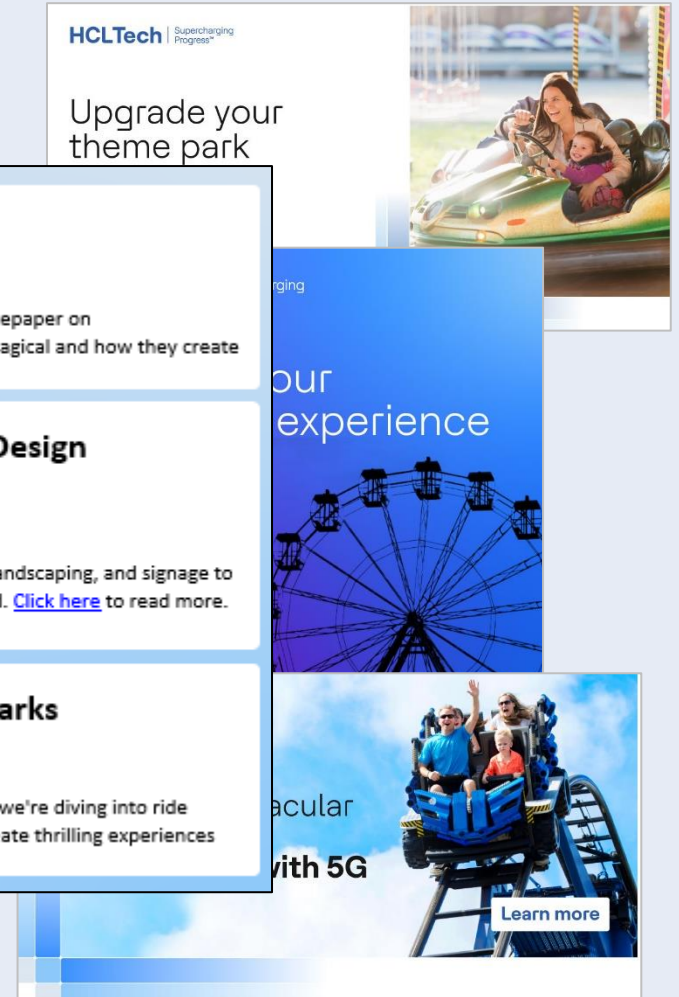
Hi there!

Have you ever wondered what goes into the design of a theme park? One key element is storytelling. Learn how theme parks use architecture, landscaping, and signage to create an immersive experience that transports visitors to a different world. [Click here](#) to read more.

Email 3: Subject: Ride Technology in Theme Parks


Hi again!

We're back with more insights from our theme park whitepaper. This time, we're diving into ride technology. Discover how theme parks balance safety and innovation to create thrilling experiences that keep guests coming back for more. [Click here](#) to read more.




HCLTech | Supercharging Progress™

Upgrade your theme park

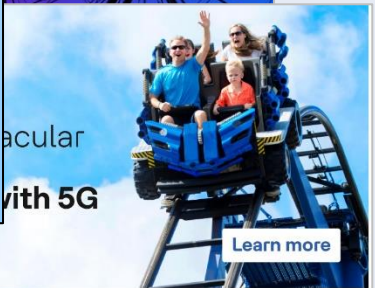


gging

our experience



cular with 5G



Learn more

IBM's Marketing Transformation



“As the demand for more and better content explodes, IBM is now doubling down on automation and AI to enable our marketers to deliver world-class personalized experiences at scale.”

Ari Sheinkin
Vice President, Performance
Marketing & Analytics

- 01 Build a culture of experimentation.
- 02 Focus on the user experience.
- 03 It's about *business* transformation, not just technology transformation.
- 04 You have to just get started.



IBM's Marketing Transformation: Summary



1 Data and platform transformation

Challenge: Complex data and infrastructure with limited automation

50% reduction in labor costs

Went from decentralized model (with BU/Geo siloes) to centralized model globally

2800 campaigns down to 100

35% more ROI on media

Simplified operating model and campaign focus

40+ DAM platforms to 1; 80% gain in targeted process speed (ie web production)

\$300M in project cost take-out



2 Integration of people, process and technology

Challenge: Limited ability to target & deliver product specific growth

Over 700% growth in product-led growth

Introduced integrated sales, marketing, and product growth squads with shared KPIs

1,500 marketers across 4 markets and 62 countries in just 90 days.

60% faster time to market

simplified digital footprint:

90% decrease in web pages

Leaner content experience: 70% decrease in assets



3 Vision for generative AI, automation and optimization

Challenge: The rise of personalization & the need to democratize content

Moved from human- to AI-generated assets for paid social

80% reduction in content creation spend

Accelerated speed to market

Other AI + Automation use cases:

1. Automated Channel Delivery

- From 3 demand tools down to 1

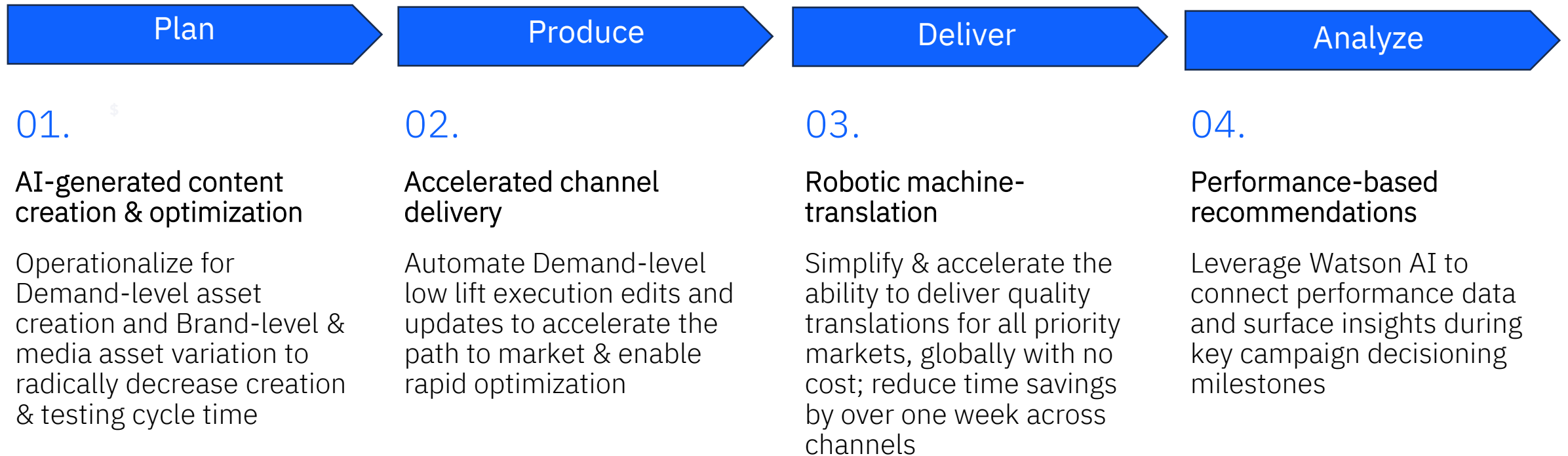
- Reduced email creation time by 77%

2. Robotic Machine-Translation

3. Performance-based Recommendations

IBM has identified [four prioritized use cases of AI and automation](#) that will help drive productivity through an intelligent content supply chain.

Highest value drivers of [AI and automation](#) powered by Watson AI and generative AI technology:

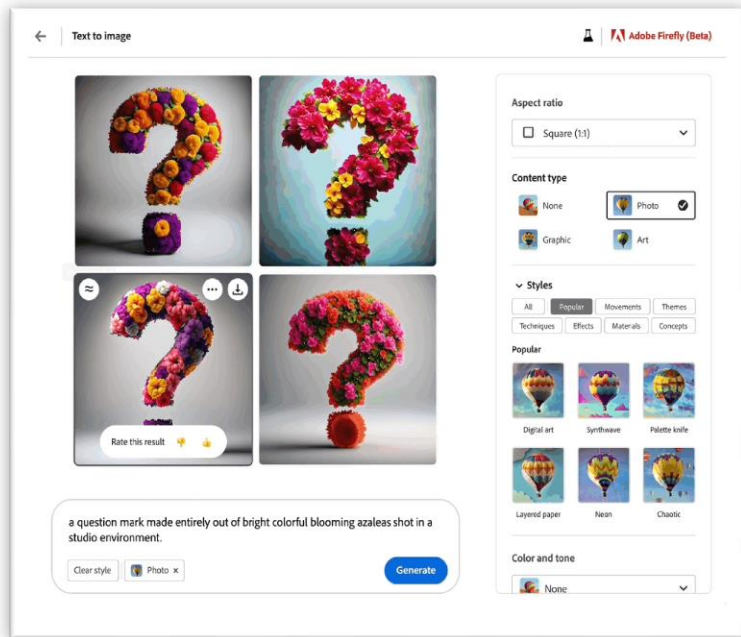


AI generated content creation and optimization: [pilot](#)

AI-generated assets drive **26X higher engagement** than IBM's average paid social benchmark

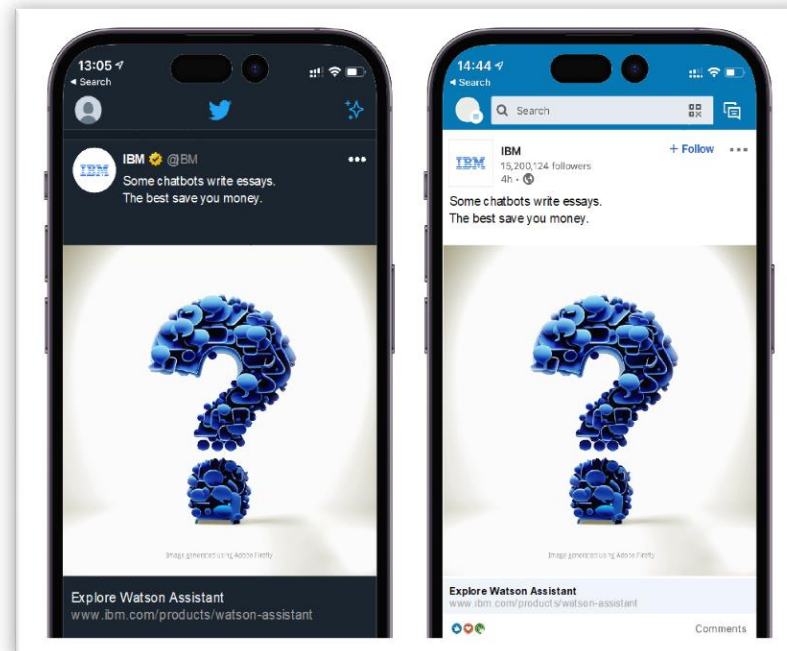
Asset Creation

Simple **text to image functionality** enabled quick & effective, fit-for-purpose AI-generated imagery for **200 initial assets & 1,000+ derivatives**



AI-generated, Watson Assistant Paid Social Assets

Demonstrated expertise in conversational AI for enterprises; creates awareness & interest via LinkedIn & Twitter



93%

high interest responses; engaging with Watson Assistant demo

20%

of responses identified as C-suite level individuals

70%

of C-suite level individuals represent net-new prospects

AI-generated content creation and optimization: vision for derivative assets

Expecting an 80% reduction in content creation spend using GenAI for content creation.

Use Case / Process	Current Avg. Working Hours Required	Current Avg. Cycle Time	Projected outcomes after implementing AI-generated content creation & optimization
Asset Development	17hrs avg. working hours req.	18 days avg. cycle time req.	~80% ↓ Reduction in content creation spend
Derivative Asset Creation	14hrs avg. working hours req.	18 days avg. cycle time req.	↑ GTM Speed to land content across markets & channels
Asset Translation	116hrs avg. working hours req.	19 days avg. cycle time req.	↓ \$\$ Reduction in translation services spend
Assets Published to .com	17hrs avg. working hours req.	30 days avg. cycle time req.	~26X Increase in content engagement compared to average benchmark
.com Page Update & Go-Live	17hrs avg. working hours req.	15 days avg. cycle time req.	

Combat the arguments against progress

Consider, instead, the opportunity cost of inaction.

Perversity



It will backfire!

Futility



It won't make a dent!

Jeopardy



It's not worth the risk
and cost!



Actions

- Reality check:
 - Experimentation culture
 - Low-hanging fruit – personalization, scale, efficiency, automation, optimization
 - Technology debt
- Try something new:
 - Shape “What ifs” into real experiments
 - Hold team experimentation brainstorm
 - Marry big data and experimentation
 - Contextualize benefits for exec leadership
 - Partner with data geeks (or become one!)

Thank You.

Phyllis Davidson
VP, Principal Analyst

BOLD

AT

WORK