

# Confidence in AI climbs among creative professionals as content demands rise

August 2026 Survey



# 93%

## believe AI is quickly becoming a professional requirement

Creatives and marketers are fielding more content requests than ever as new formats and channels call for tailored assets rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. As these content demands continue to rise, AI is increasingly part of how marketers and creatives try to keep pace. With reliance on these tools growing, so do the questions about what this means for how they work.

The data reflects this shift. Nearly all creatives (92%) say generative AI (GenAI) plays a larger role in their work today than it did a year ago, and 93% believe AI is quickly becoming a professional requirement, up from 87% since our March 2026 benchmark.

Many organizations are expecting these AI tools to be incorporated into workflows, with most creatives saying they're expected to use them regularly. As AI adoption takes shape for organizations, one thing is clear: creatives' confidence in the technology has never been higher, even as they continue to navigate new and increasingly complex workflows.

Adobe Digital Insights' latest report analyzes insights from a July-August 2026 survey of more than 800 U.S.-based marketers and creatives. These findings reveal evolving AI sentiment and expectations from the last four months, including organizational investment, agentic adoption, and productivity impacts as more creatives move from the sandbox to AI at scale. Here are some key takeaways:

### Key Insights:

- Demand is surging even as marketing cycles continue to contract, with 89% of marketers believing timelines have shrunk from just two years ago, up from **82%** in March.
- Adoption is soaring, with **92%** of creatives reporting GenAI is a larger part of their job than a year ago and roughly half (**49%**) saying their use has increased more than 50% in just the last six months.
- Agentic AI is emerging as the new baseline, with **77%** of creatives having used more agentic AI tools.
- Content speed and quality are improving, with roughly two-thirds of creatives generating more assets (**68%**) and feeling more comfortable with AI, allowing them to produce assets they are more confident in.
- Confidence is building as positive sentiment for creatives climbs across the board though the general population remains more mixed.
- Governance is expanding, with **56%** of organizations establishing guidelines around approved creative design tools.

# The gap between content volume and campaign velocity continues to widen

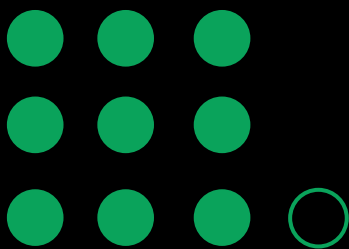
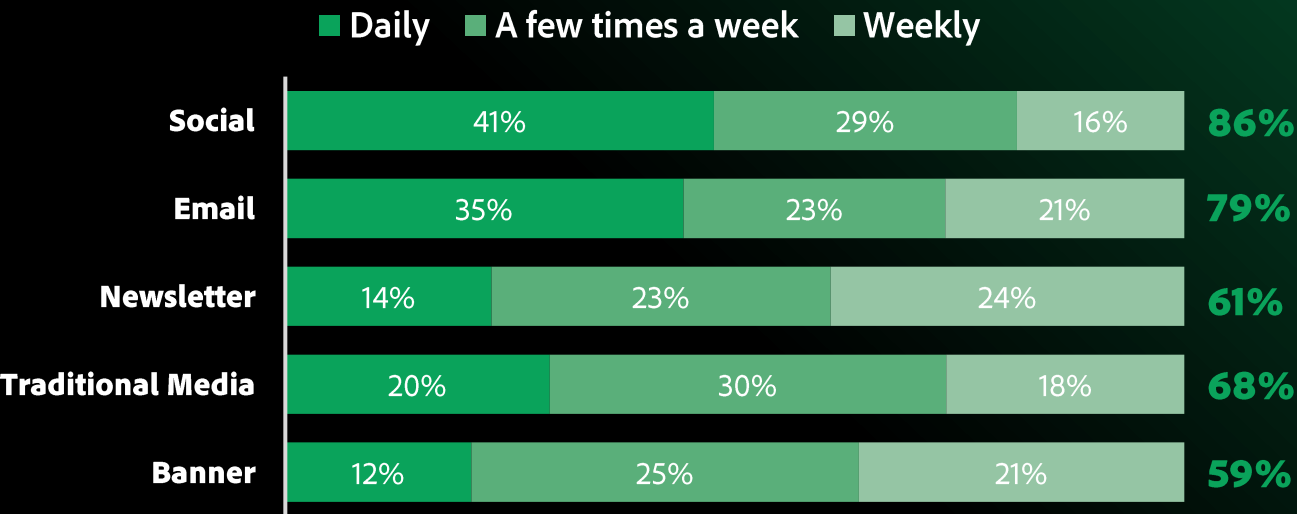
The demand for content is showing no signs of abating. The majority of marketers **(84%) believe content demand has at least doubled over the last two years**, a perception that has held steady since March (83%).

## Observed content demand growth by Marketers

March 2026 vs. July 2026

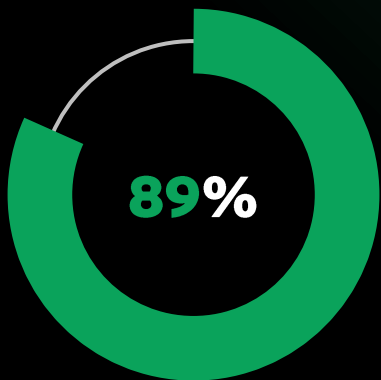


# How often brand campaign content is updated



9/10

expect demand to double by 2028



Shorter time from inception to completion

**Roughly 9 in 10 expect this demand to at least double again by 2028**, a near-universal pressure regardless of company size (89% for small; 95% for mid; 90% for enterprise). Nearly a third (31%) anticipate it could increase at least tenfold, up from 28% just four months ago.

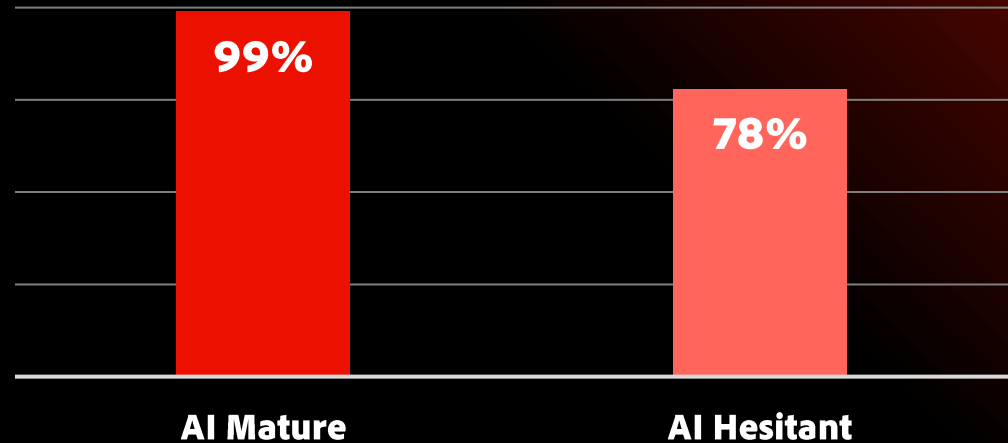
This comes at a time when marketing cycles are being squeezed even tighter. Nearly 9 in 10 marketers **(89%) believe the time between campaign inception and completion is significantly shorter** than two years ago, up from 82% in March. To keep pace, teams are refreshing campaign content at a near-constant cadence, led by **social and email assets that are often updated at least weekly.**

# Creatives feel more confident using AI tools

The link between AI and productivity has never been stronger. Nearly 7 in 10 (**68%**) **creatives believe AI design tools help them generate more assets.** Creatives also feel more confident as their comfort and use of AI tools have grown. Only 13% say AI has had a minimal impact on asset volume and performance so far. Unsurprisingly, quality gains are most pronounced among AI forward creatives, where virtually all (**99%**) **report improved work from GenAI** compared to just 78% of AI hesitant creatives.

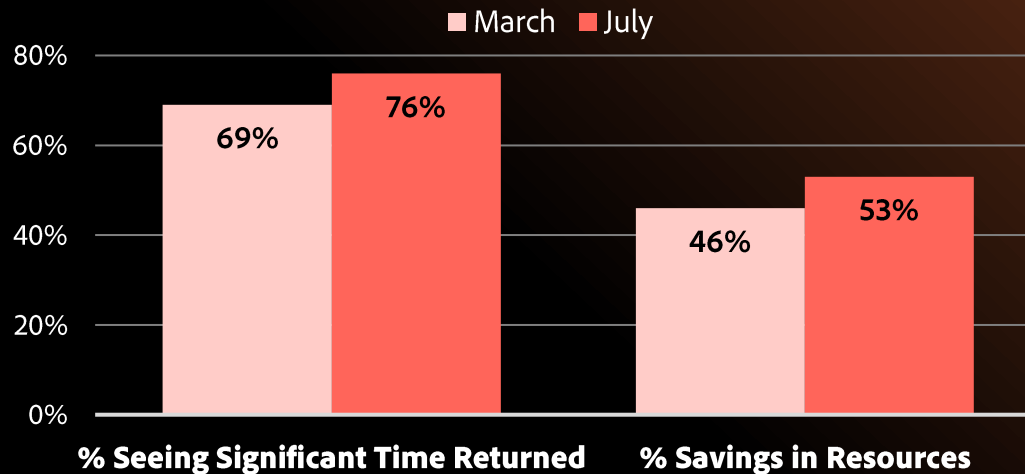
**68%** Creatives believe AI design tools help them generate more assets

## % Reported Improved work from Gen AI



**AI mature teams** are defined as creatives and marketers who use GenAI both more frequently (i.e., higher share of work including AI) and are saving more hours with it.

## Savings in Time & Resources



Creatives are saying the quality of AI-generated assets is better than ever, led by video, photo-realistic images, and cartoons/illustrations.

Nearly all

**95% creatives say**

their ability to get what they want from prompts is improving (up from 87% in March) signaling fluency and quality are more connected than ever.

Creatives report that **GenAI has made a marked improvement** in image, video, and audio workflows since March, particularly with image generation and storyboarding. This is leading to meaningful savings in both time and resources: roughly three quarters (76%) of creatives have seen significant time returned (up from 69% in March) while more than half (53%) have saved resources (up from 46% in March).

AI's influence is extending beyond creative teams. A growing number of marketers have reported AI use in the last four months, up from 59% in March. But adoption isn't without any apprehension. While roughly three quarters (73%) say design teams have armed them with simple templates and workflows to generate their own assets, they still value support from design partners to ensure quality and consistency.

# Agentic is the next AI frontier as more creatives tap multiple tools and models more easily

As more professionals lean on AI for content support, the majority of creatives (77%) and marketers (60%) are already taking the next step, putting agentic tools to leverage multiple models and workflows in a more collaborative way.

% Perceived Improvement in AI Generated Creative Asset Quality

| Asset Type             | Aug 2025 | March 2026 | July 2026 |
|------------------------|----------|------------|-----------|
| Photo-realistic Images | 65%      | 69%        | 80%       |
| Cartoons/ Illustration | 68%      | 70%        | 75%       |
| Digital Paintings      | 69%      | 65%        | 74%       |
| Videos                 | -        | 71%        | 81%       |
| Audio                  | -        | 63%        | 68%       |

**87%**

Creatives use Agentic Software  
at GenAI-ready Organizations

**52%**

Creatives at  
least-ready firms



**The most GenAI-ready organizations**

are defined by those with deeper AI maturity, including dedicated AI budgets, AI usage mandates, deep workflow integrations, among other metrics.

Unsurprisingly, those most prepared to harness this shift from AI assistance to AI autonomy are the most mature AI organizations and GEN AI ready teams within them. Nearly 9 in 10 **(87%) creatives at the most GenAI-ready organizations have used agentic software** versus just 52% at the least-ready firms.

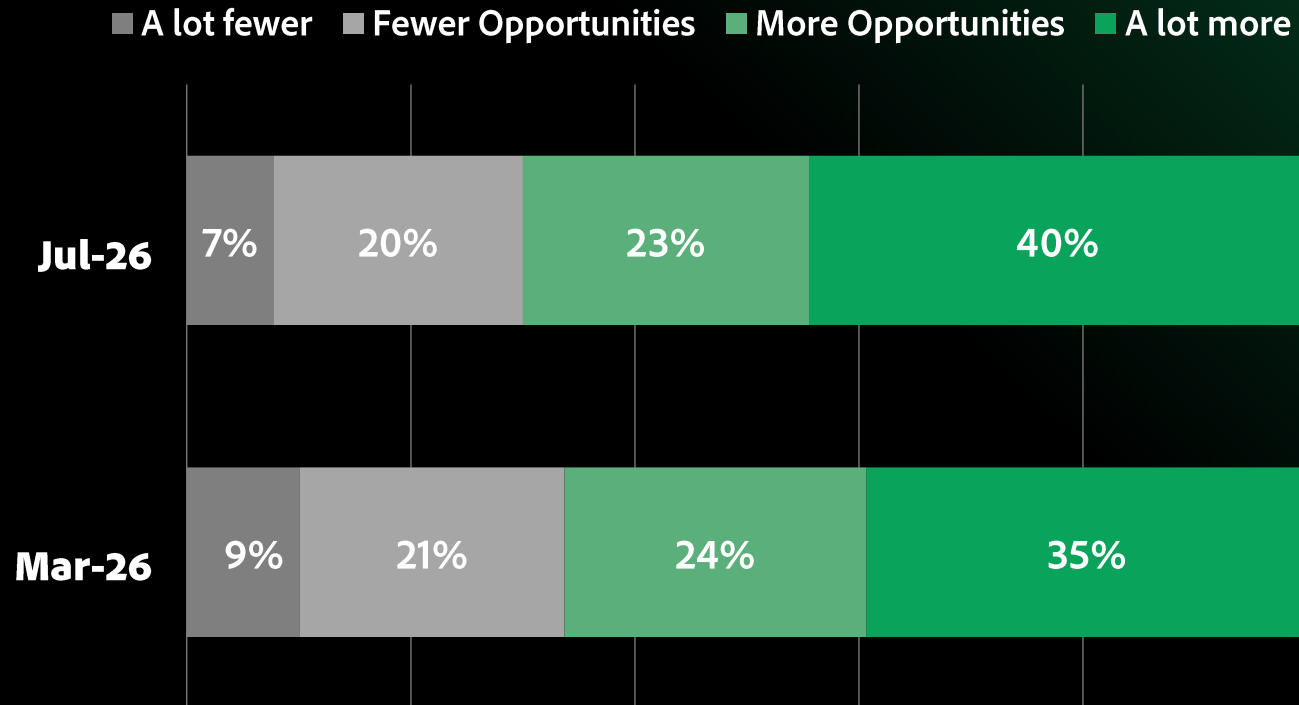
This trust is reflected in the work. Guided by creatives' judgement, experience, and discernment, the quality of many AI outputs has improved, particularly among organizations and users who are most comfortable using AI tools.

# As creatives settle into AI, sentiment is climbing slowly

As creatives and marketers embrace more advanced AI tools, one thing is clear: they are increasingly more satisfied and confident in them, from greater protections in commercial safety to higher quality outputs.



## Perception of Job Creative/Design Opportunities the Past Year



Although many creatives surveyed **(75%) feel AI has helped make their roles more fulfilling**, 10% disagree. This varies greatly depending on use of AI. Nine in 10 (90%) advanced AI users say GenAI has positively influenced their job fulfillment. However, 51% who are less comfortable with or new to AI tools do not yet feel it has positively influenced their job fulfillment.

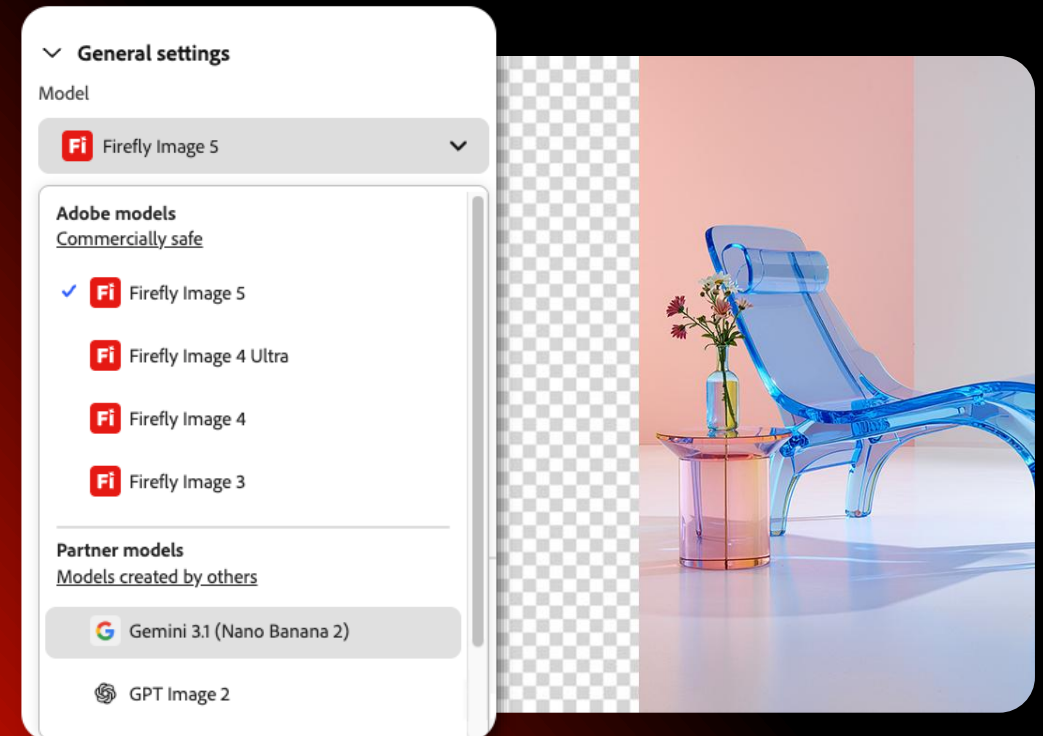
It's not just perception that's improving, but tangible opportunities as well. In March, 46% of creatives reported more job opportunities in the field over the past year, while 30% say there were fewer. That gap has only widened since. More than half (51%) have now seen opportunities grow in the last 12 months compared to just 27% who reported a decline.

# Multi-model orchestration, reusable workflows remain out of reach for many creatives

Despite widespread optimism, many creatives share that they still lack the organizational infrastructure needed to scale and capitalize on AI effectively, with obstacles around multi-model access and reusable workflows continuing to stunt productivity. Only a quarter (26%) of creatives note they reliably have access to multiple models and applications through a single program, with more than a third (35%) continuously forced to toggle between screens and tools if they want to use multiple models.



From storyboards to social posts, **Adobe Firefly** is an all-in-one creative AI studio that brings models, applications, and tools together into one place. Instead of bouncing between screens and tabs, creatives can build with models from Google, OpenAI, Runway and others alongside Adobe's leading editing tools.



## Creatives in Workflows

66%

Grafting AI into  
existing workflows

34%

New design workflows  
with AI integrated

## Creative Workflows

23%

Reusable design  
workflows/  
templates

42%

Rebuild from  
scratch

75%

brand consistency with AI-  
generated content is  
challenging

The gap runs deeper than tools. Some **(34%)** creatives are on teams that are building new processes dedicated to integrating AI into existing design workflows. The remaining two-thirds **(66%)** are on teams that are grafting it onto existing systems, keeping it separate from main workflows, or relying on ad hoc use.

This is compounded by a lack of repeatable workflows. Less than a quarter **(23%)** are using fully reusable design workflows or templates, while **42%** are having to frequently rebuild these creative processes from scratch, leading to significant rework and inconsistency across teams. This comes at a time when three-quarters **(75%)** of creatives admit that maintaining brand consistency across a high volume of AI-generated content is a meaningful challenge for their organizations. Closing these gaps with connected tools and repeatable workflows will differentiate teams that simply adopt AI and those that can truly scale it.

# From organizational structure to operational governance, AI investments continue to mature

As creatives' AI adoption advances, organizational appetite is quickly catching up. Compared with just four months ago, organizations are investing in a broader set of AI applications, from video, image, and engineering tools to agents. In fact, **77% of creative leaders** report their teams now have a dedicated GenAI budget, even as nearly a third (32%) of creatives say some clients have asked them not to use AI in their work.

15%



more likely to invest in **video** tools

19%



more likely to invest in **image** tools

17%

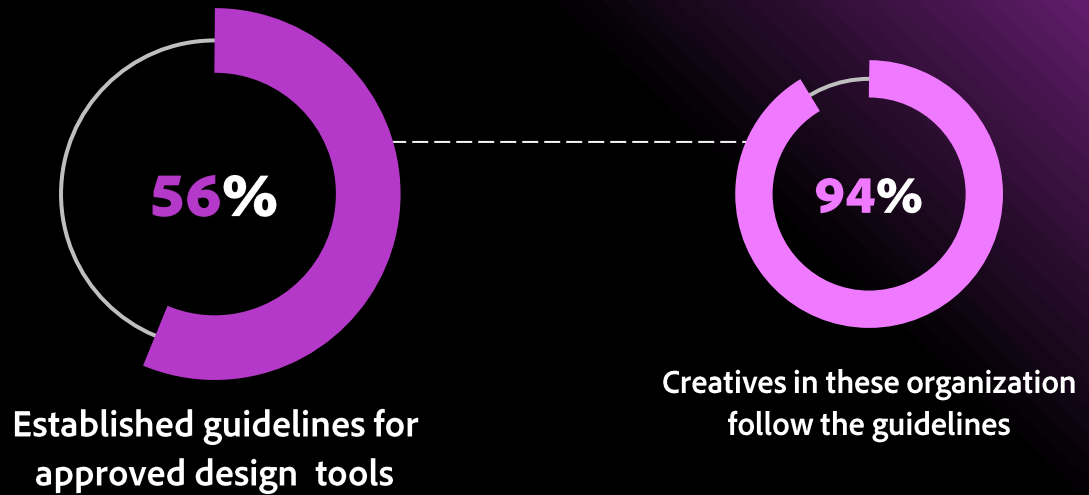


more likely to invest in **engineering** tools

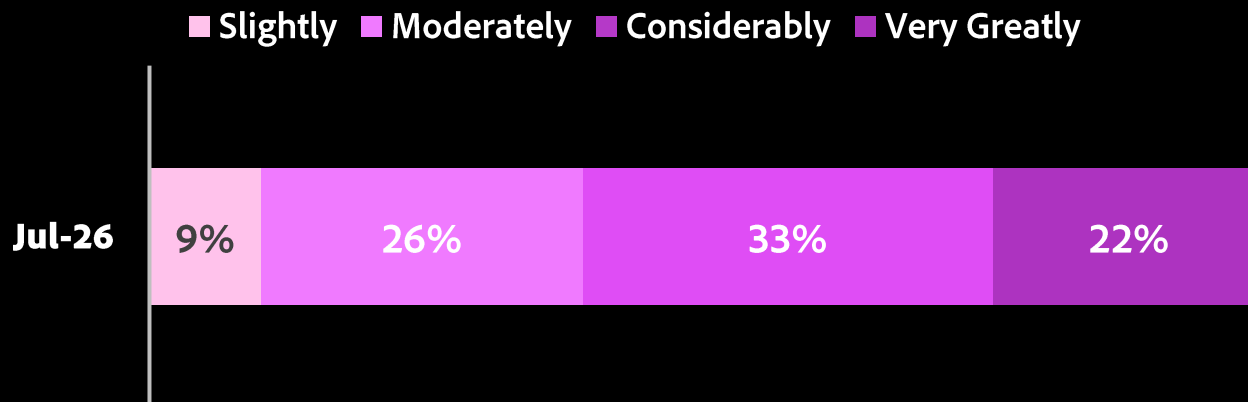
5%



more likely to invest in **AI Agents**



## Indemnification's impact with Creatives' confidence in AI-use



These investments aren't just revolutionizing how teams work, but how they're structured. Most creatives (72%) and marketers (70%) say AI has influenced team composition, a shift felt most keenly by AI forward creatives (82% versus just 51% of those who are AI hesitant), suggesting a stronger link between individual comfort levels and organizational support.

As AI toolkits widen, the governance around them is strengthening. More than half (56%) of organizations have now established guidelines around approved design tools, which nearly all creatives (94%) say they follow, pointing to the potential for lower shadow AI use within creative work. But more than half (55%) also report indemnification for AI-generated content would considerably affect their confidence in using AI for high-stakes client or commercial work, signaling an eagerness for more formal legal protections not just internal rules and guidelines.

# Takeaway



As content demands accelerate and production timelines intensify, AI is rapidly becoming not just a tool but a requirement for today's creatives and marketers. Spurred by deeper organizational investment, these professionals are leaning heavily on a broader—and increasingly agentic—AI toolkit to not just keep pace but to improve the quality and efficiency of their work.

Unsurprisingly, those extracting the most value are consistently the most AI-mature organizations and users within them. And while challenges persist, creatives' confidence and comfort in AI tools have risen to new heights over the last four months.

Organizations that can harness these tailwinds through continued AI investments, stronger governance, and simplified infrastructure and workflows will empower design and marketing engines that don't just build assets, but the future of creative work itself.

**Adobe**