

# The State of AI in Advertising

From automation  $\longrightarrow$  To autonomy

AI is reshaping how advertising is created, discovered, traded and transacted.



# £18bn

projected AI-driven digital ad spend by 2030

AI-driven advertising could account for nearly one-third of UK digital ad spend within the decade.



## The industry is moving fast as AI adoption accelerates

**75%** of IAB UK members are already experimenting with agentic AI

Yet only **4%** consider themselves truly "agent-first"

**Today's biggest AI use cases**  $\longrightarrow$  **But barriers remain**

Creative optimisation	Privacy & compliance
Audience insights	Brand safety
Measurement	Trust
Workflow automation	Skills gaps
Media planning	Tool costs

\*amongst advertisers and IAB members

Optimism is high with **73%** of advertisers believing AI will transform advertising for the better

## Consumers are adopting AI faster than many expected, but trust is not keeping pace

**73%** used an AI tool in the last 3 months

**15%** believe AI assistants are genuinely objective

**73%** say they would never trust AI to make major purchases autonomously

**The tension**  
Consumers embrace AI utility. **But resist AI control.**

## Four transformations reshaping advertising

**01 Content creation**

AI is turning creative production into creative adaptation at scale.

*But concerns are growing*

As AI-generated content scales, many fear a "sea of sameness" in advertising creativity.

**02 Zero-click search**

Search is becoming conversation.

**74%** of advertisers believe AI summaries reduce website traffic.

Yet **49%** report stronger conversion rates from AI-qualified traffic.

SEO  $\longrightarrow$  GEO

**03 Agent trading**

Media buying is moving from optimisation toward autonomous execution.

*But trust remains a barrier*

Only around **20%** of members believe fully autonomous media trading will become mainstream in the next 12 months.

And **47%** of advertisers say 'I do not trust AI agents in advertising because of a lack of transparency in their decision making'.

**04 Agentic commerce**

AI is increasingly shaping the shopping journey.

*But consumers still want control*

Only **23%** are comfortable with AI making purchases on their behalf.

## The future of AI in advertising will not be determined by capability alone, it will be determined by trust

The winners of the AI era will combine:

**Strong AI capability**  
(skills & talent)

**Robust governance**  
to enable responsible innovation

**High-quality data foundation**



## Advertising is entering its autonomous era

The question is no longer whether AI will reshape advertising, but who will shape AI's role within it.

[Read the full report](#)

Explore:

- AI-driven ad spend forecasts
- Consumer trust insights
- Agentic commerce trends
- Zero-click search impacts
- Governance & policy implications
- Exclusive industry interviews