

AI is turning the world of marketing upside down

As LLMs and AI overviews replace the traditional search engine, brands need to embrace a strategic model that considers a new audience: the AI agents who convey their message to the public.

The d!ff

Meet your brand's new audience
How AI agents read and process information. And why it matters.

The shape of marketing to come
Flipping the script: a new marketing model for a new era.

Authenticity rules
Why AI is a poor (and risky) replacement for human creativity.

Frankly



The AI era is here.

Why it's time to Flip the traditional approach to marketing.

By Klavs Valskov, Partner.

The marketing industry has always been susceptible to trends and fads. When a new technology or channel pops up, marketers are usually the first to jump on the bandwagon. It's a pattern we've seen repeat itself, over and over again. But the hype around AI is unprecedented, and the B2B marketing industry is not exempt from disruption.

As LLMs and AI overviews become more commonplace, something fundamental is shifting behind the scenes: a structural change in the way brands connect with their audiences. In fact, 94% of B2B buyers are already using AI to learn about brands and make purchasing decisions.* The traditional customer journey is dying.

Brands now have less control over the way their products and services are presented. And 70-80%* of the journey is already complete by the time a vendor actually makes contact with a customer.

The information that customers find is mediated and presented to them by AI agents that gather and process data about a brand or product. So CMOs and marketers need to treat these agents like a new audience.

At Frankly – a creative digital agency based in Copenhagen – we've formulated a new marketing model (you'll find full details on pages 6-7) that directly addresses this new dynamic. We call it **the Flip**. It's an approach that totally rethinks traditional marketing and activation strategies.

The Flip is all about developing an ability to communicate with machines *as well as* humans. The way these two audiences deal with information is very different. So in order to make the most of this new dynamic, marketers will have to learn how to speak to the AI agents.

And to learn how to speak to them, we need to know how they work...

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20-50%

of search traffic is at risk.

70-80%

of the B2B buying journey is completed before a buyer engages a vendor.

94%

of B2B buyers are using AI to learn about brands and make purchasing decisions.

So you've fed ChatGPT* your prompt...

What happens next? Unlike traditional search engines, LLMs work with full context, not just keywords.

By **Chris Pedersen**, Chief Technology Officer and AI Lead.

- 01** First, the LLM agent decides what it already knows
It draws on its model knowledge, i.e. info absorbed during training.
- 2a** The question is generic
It may answer straight away.
- 2b** The question is more specific
It searches websites, documents, data and connected systems for content, running multiple, detailed searches.
- 3a** Information is vague, jargonistic, unverified or appears irrelevant
The agent discards it and moves on.
- 3b** Information is clear, consistent, credible and relevant to the user's problem
The agent uses it as part of its response.
- 04** The agent provides its final answer
This comprises model knowledge + user context + retrieved content, built from the information the agent considers most useful for the question.

REMEMBER:

Humans search.
Agents investigate.

They don't just ask "Who ranks highest?", they ask "Who has the clearest, most relevant and verifiable answer?"

Appearing in agentic search relies on your brand showing up via information that is

so structured, accessible, consistent and credible that an agent can't help but trust and therefore recommend it.

And happily, we can show you how to do that.

markets we serve.

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What do we do?

Brand Strategy, Positioning, Value Proposition, Brand Architecture, Go-to-Market, Audience Strategy
Brand Activation, Messaging, Storytelling, Narrative, Visual Identity, Tone of Voice, Corporate Identity, Employer Branding, UX/UI, Social Media
Concept Development, Design, Art Direction, Campaign Development, Experience Design, Motion, Video, Data Visualisation
Digital Strategy, Digital Marketing, Digital Experiences, Digital Tools, Websites, Apps, Interactive Experiences, AI
Sales Enablement, Demand Generation, Product Launch



How to optimise your existing brand strategy for AI discovery

The Flip is a new way of marketing. Rather than creating separate strategies for humans and machines – doubling effort and diluting distinctiveness – the Flip makes your existing brand strategy work for both.

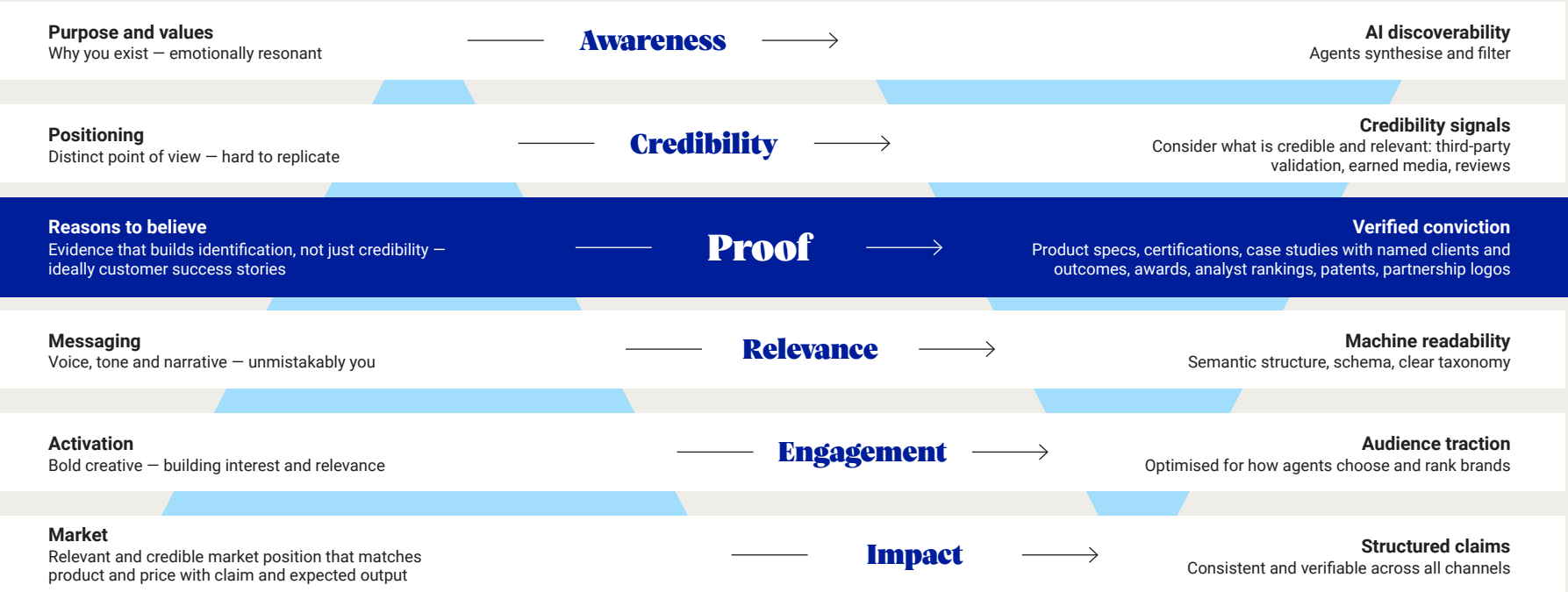
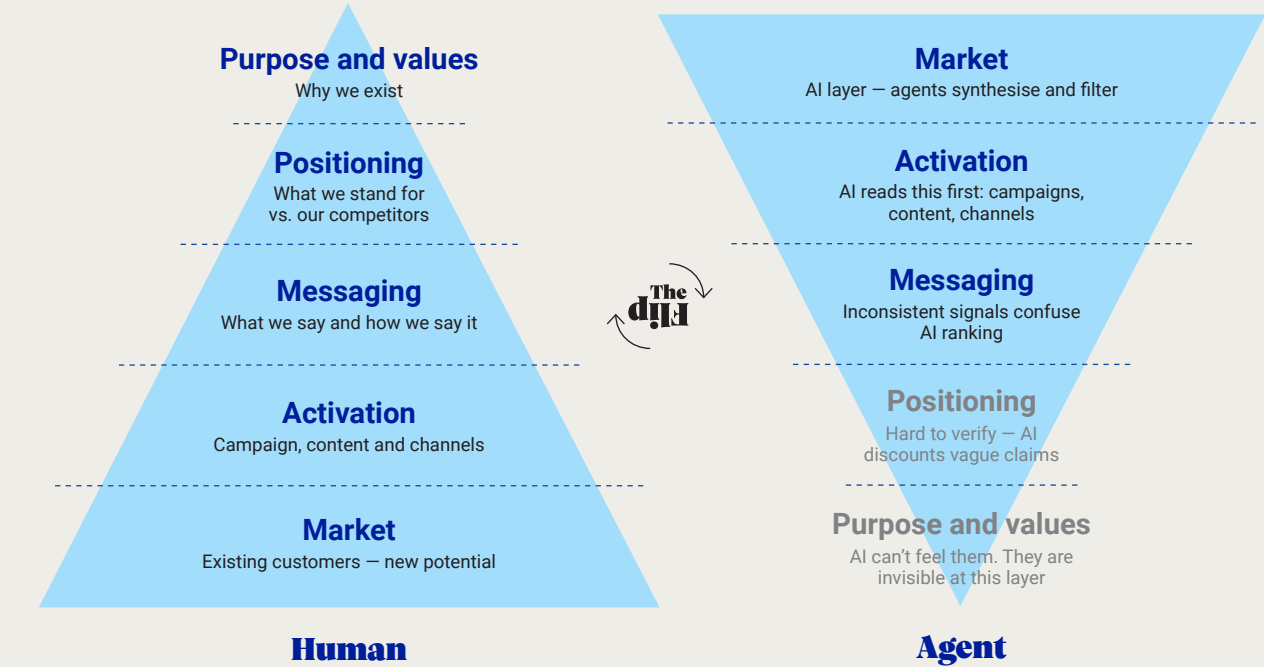
Reorienting, not reinventing.

The Flip takes the different layers of a brand strategy and redesigns them so the same layer can be read by a person and processed by an agent without contradicting itself.

Flipping the traditional brand model

Brand building has always been about establishing a meaning and purpose. That’s where brand loyalty, equity and price premium ultimately come from.

With agents indexing and cataloguing a brand’s offering, disregarding its more abstract purpose and values, we find ourselves in a market reality that forces us to flip our way of thinking.



The first task is to activate the brand layers. Brand encounters are no longer mediated by people. Agents synthesise, compare, filter and rank what they find, which means that every brand investment you make must speak to a corresponding condition in the market:

Purpose and values → Resonance: What makes people care?

Awareness → Discoverability: What makes us easy to find and understand?

Credibility → Evidence: What makes our claims believable?

Relevance → Meaning: What makes it clear where and why we matter?

Engagement → Traction: What helps us surface and stay visible?

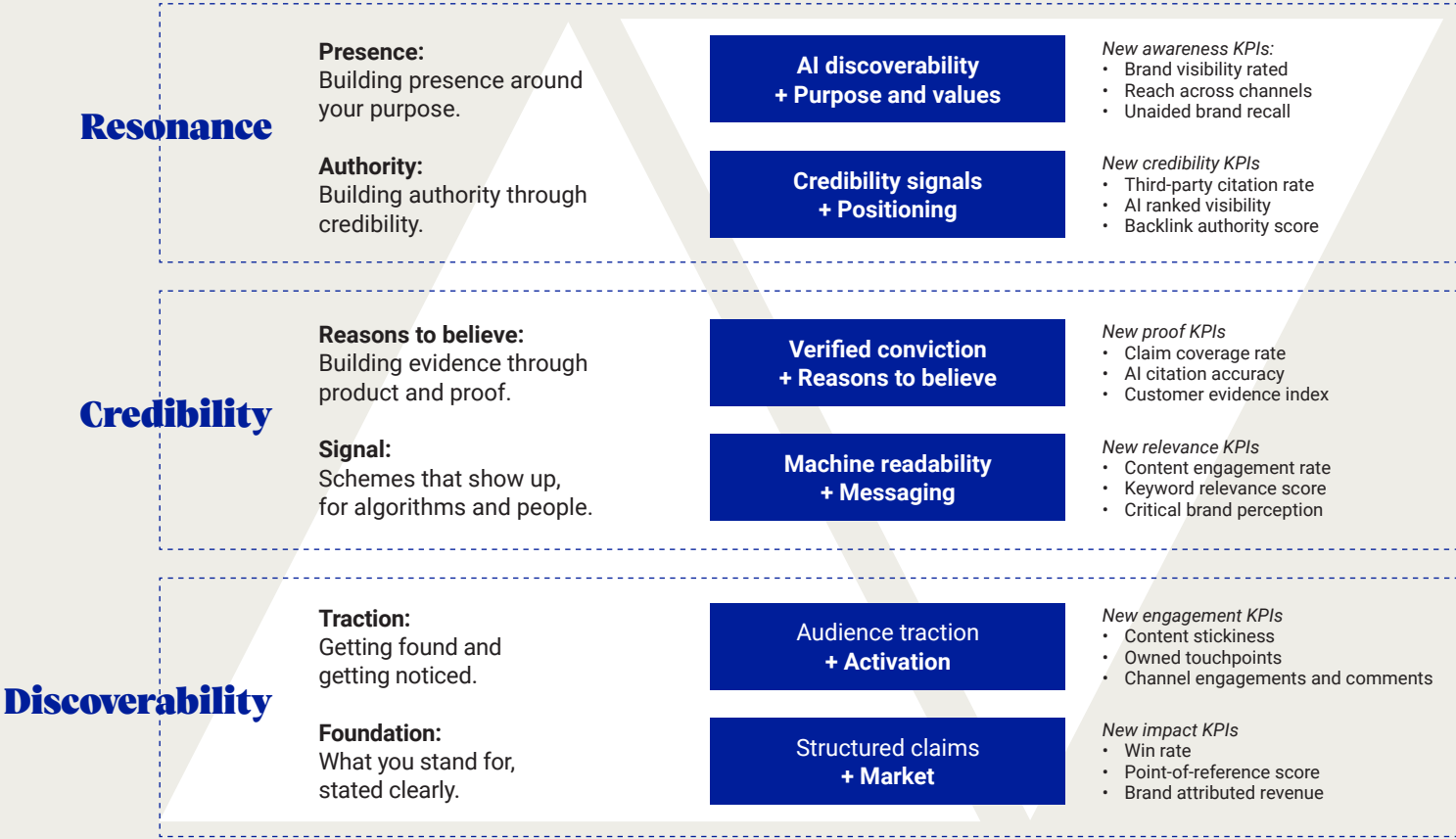
Impact → Verification: What proves our claims to be true?

The Flip exists in the bridges between what we invest in as a brand and what must become true outside the brand for that investment to compound.

- Now the questions can change:
- What does the evidence say we are (not just our intention)?
 - Where are we the most relevant?
 - Why should anyone believe we matter?
 - What would need to be true for the market to perceive us differently?
 - And how will we know when that shift has actually happened?

We need to start putting evidence front and centre, so the Flip introduces a new brand layer: **Reasons to believe**.

Reasons to believe are the evidence behind your brand’s claims: proof points, independent validation and stories from real customers. Evidence has always mattered, but when agents filter recommendations and look for information they can verify, it becomes critical.



This brings us to a final compounded view, where we combine brand and agent criteria to identify the consensus that forms the bridge.

The layers are now paired, shaping the Flip in its complete form: a brand model that enables our investments to compound through resonance, credibility and discoverability. A model that requires us to be more selective: claiming only what we’re prepared to prove, and connecting brand, marketing and GEO metrics into a more complete view of brand performance.

Here’s how you can use the Flip to build your brand:

1. Presence
The purpose and values that give people a reason to care. For an AI agent, presence means evidence that the brand exists and matters: visibility, mentions and consistent presence across relevant sources.

2. Authority
The distinctive position a brand occupies for buyers. For machines, it becomes something that can be weighed through third-party citations, backlinks, references and ranked visibility.

3. Reasons to believe
What turns promises into conviction. For people, that might be a com-pelling customer story. For an agent, it means checkable evidence: named case studies, certifications and verifiable claims.

4. Signal
How messaging carries a brand’s voice and narrative. Its second reading is structural: the semantics, schema and taxonomy that allow machines to understand what the brand is saying.

5. Traction + foundation
Where activation creates interest and relevance. For agents, it is consistency and structure that allow the right claims to surface in the right context.

Read on to discover how the Flip works in practice.

Brand Equity X The Flip.

Build it once; make it work twice.

By **Lerke Christoffersen**, Head of Brand.



It used to be the case that complex B2B brands, particularly in industrial markets, could use sales relationships or word of mouth to compensate for weak or invisible equity. But now, AI agents help create initial shortlists for potential buyers. So a brand that can't provide accessible evidence for its expertise, quality or leadership may not be included.

The practical challenge: How to make existing equity visible, credible and usable to both people and machines

Here at Frankly we recently applied **the Flip** to a project with a global industrial company. It was competing on technical superiority in a category increasingly influenced by agent-driven research.

Its brand rested on two strong equities: quality and reliability. Buyers understood them, the organisation believed in them, but the infrastructure carrying those perceptions into machine-readable environments was weak.

Rather than immediately crafting new messaging, we started by examining the strategic pillars supporting those equities.

The questions were deliberately practical:

DEPTH: where does the brand have expertise, and how much evidence can it put behind it?

GAPS: which strengths are visible internally but almost invisible externally?

LEADERSHIP: where does the brand credibly lead the category, and where is it perceived to follow?

PROOF: which claims are backed by accessible evidence, and which still depend largely on relationships and experience?

VISIBILITY: where is strong brand equity failing to translate into discoverable signals?

This creates a clearer hierarchy for investment. Instead of asking, *"What should we say about AI?"*, teams can ask, *"Which parts of our existing brand need to become stronger, more visible or better evidenced?"*

Turning diagnosis into action

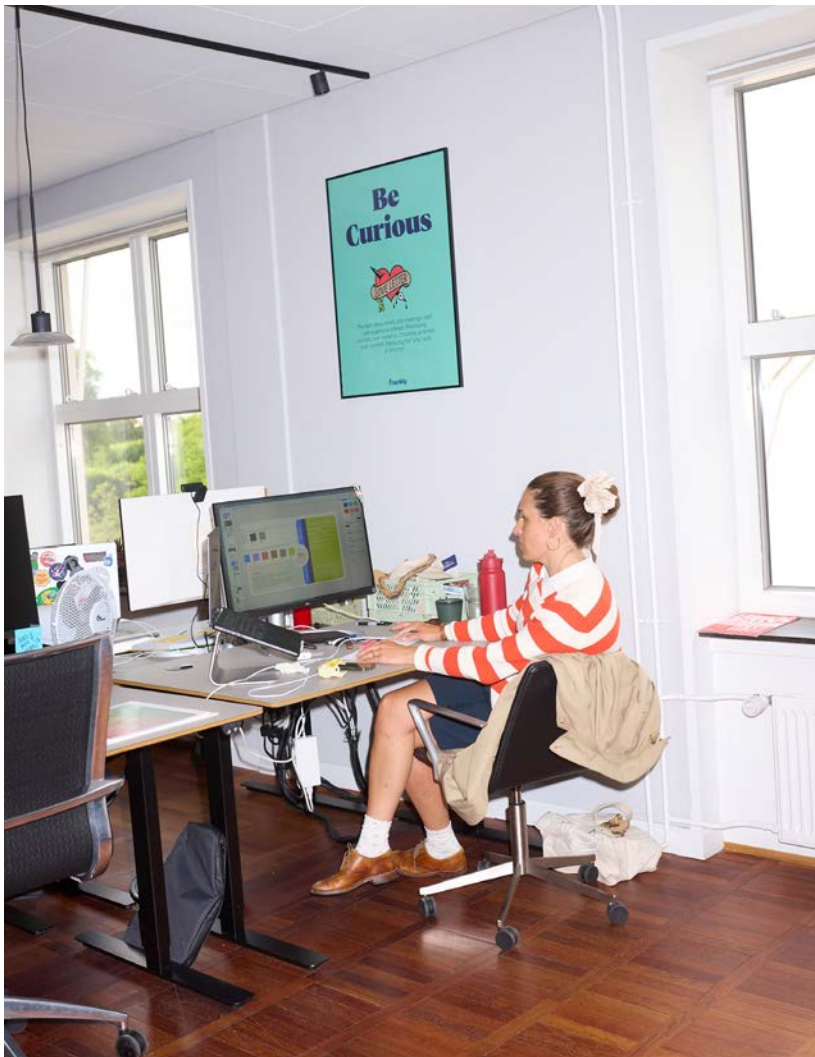
For this brand, we defined equity around three familiar outcomes:

01 Awareness, through stronger signal density and top-of-mind presence.

02 Association, through clearer connections between the brand and its premium positioning.

03 Loyalty, through stronger proof and advocacy.

Crucially, every action then needed to work in two directions. It had to strengthen the experience and perception of the brand for people, and create signals an agent could find, understand and verify.



Before and after the Flip

PROBLEM: a strategic pillar had become too internally focused.

BEFORE: create another tagline.

WITH THE FLIP: create authoritative, citable content and third-party validation capable of leading the category conversation.

PROBLEM: an important equity existed mainly in the knowledge of employees and sales teams.

BEFORE: write some LinkedIn posts.

WITH THE FLIP: turn that expertise into a consistent, structured presence across touchpoints.

PROBLEM: a pillar lacked proof.

BEFORE: invent a stronger promise.

WITH THE FLIP: document the real consequences of existing expertise through evidence, cases and demonstrable outcomes.

The aim was the same in each case: build equity once, but make it work twice.



What brand teams should do next

For marketing leaders, **the Flip** provides a practical starting sequence:

Map the equities and strategic pillars you already have.



Rank them by depth, visibility, authority and proof.



Identify where strong human perception is poorly represented in discoverable evidence.



Prioritise structural actions that close those gaps across brand, content, sales, digital and distribution.

This is particularly important for B2B brands built around "people" qualities: expertise, partnership, service, etc. A brilliant salesperson can demonstrate expertise, and a long relationship can prove

partnership, but AI agents only see what can be found, connected, cited and verified. If your expertise is largely undocumented, a competitor with stronger evidence can appear more authoritative. The upshot: brand equity increasingly needs to be treated as infrastructure, not simply sentiment.

However, there's an important limit to all this structure.

While the goal is to make the brand's value travel further...

Making a brand legible is not the same as making it memorable

Evidence can establish credibility; structure can improve discovery; signals can earn consideration. But none of them, alone, creates desire.

That still requires creativity.

Authenticity and the crucial role of human creativity in the age of AI

The impact of AI on our industry is undeniable. But while many new tools have found their way into our workflows, there is a pervasive sense of unease about how AI is affecting the work we do, our clients' expectations, and the very concept of creativity itself. With the landscape constantly in flux, one thing is certain: brands need human creativity more than ever.

By Jesper Strøm Madsen, Creative Director.



The other day, I was struck by how much my workday has changed since AI appeared. I still spend a lot of time in front of a computer, but the way I work is drastically different. Most of the tools and apps we use at Frankly have been pumped full of AI features. They can be incredibly useful for speeding up some of our drudgier tasks, but they often leave me with the vague feeling that something is off.

Some days I love the way AI helps me to develop an idea, to imagine weird and wonderful possibilities, then bring them to life in a fraction of the time it took me before. Other days I hate its generic suggestions, its inconsistencies, and its sycophantic tone. My feelings are ambivalent; I have a love-hate relationship with AI.

The old dilemmas we used to face at work have been replaced by new ones. At Frankly, we find ourselves constantly drawing and re-drawing the boundaries of where and how AI should be used. It's not always clear. What is clear is the way that AI has affected our industry.

When AI first hit the headlines, there was a lot of doomsaying about its impact on the creative world. The logic behind it wasn't very nuanced: *if machines can churn out creative content instantly, why would we need humans?*

But it has quickly become apparent that content solely generated by AI is just not good. It's inauthentic, lifeless, sometimes downright cringey. And, time and again, we've witnessed companies who rely on it discover the detrimental impact it has on brand perception.

As creatives, we know why this is. Sure, some of these tools are ingenious, but there is no replacing human creativity. Humans have an innate understanding of context and nuance that allows us to constantly find new ways to inspire and connect with each other. Creatives play with context to make you feel something. To delight, shock



or excite you. To take you on a journey. To build up tension, then resolve it in unexpected ways. The way we communicate cannot be reduced to a mathematical formula, however complex. There is no algorithmic replacement for empathy.

As LLMs and AI overviews displace the traditional search engine, human creativity is needed more than ever. Brands now have two audiences: humans, and the agents who scrape factual and verifiable data about brands for search and enquiry results.

That's why our approach, **the Flip**, addresses both. To succeed in this new era, brands need to optimise their content for AI agents,

while connecting with their audiences on an authentic, human level. Successful brands inspire. They leave an unforgettable impression. So the stakes are high. An over-reliance on AI risks the one thing that is **guaranteed** to destroy a business: indifference.

Things move fast in the world of AI. And while no one really knows where it will all land, our philosophy is unchanging: AI can be used to augment human creativity. But it can never, and *should* never, replace it. In a world where AI-generated content abounds, only the truly, authentically creative will stand out.

The Flip is brought to you by:

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Your creative digital agency.

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20 years on, we're leading the way in the AI era, with humanity.

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