

White Paper

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Creative Industry

March 2023

ENGINE™
CREATIVE



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Executive summary

Engine Creative has been at the forefront of tech innovations in the creative sector for over 25 years, and we have been exploring AI in our creative workflow process since 2021.

After seeing AI hit mainstream markets and explode thanks to tools such as ChatGPT and Midjourney, we decided it was time to find out what the rest of the creative sector thought about AI, and so we conducted our own research.

Our research examined the age, role, industry, experience and opinions of 113 creative experts and professionals to discover new insights into how creatives approach AI and how it is impacting their role.

The findings show that, on the whole, the creative industry is very aware of AI and although opinions are split between welcoming and embracing AI, to resenting and seeing AI as a threat, the majority are aware it is coming and is unavoidable.

Those who are embracing AI often had more experience than those who are not, highlighting that exposure to the technology could greatly change perception. However, despite current mixed opinion, most recognise that AI will be a part of their future role.

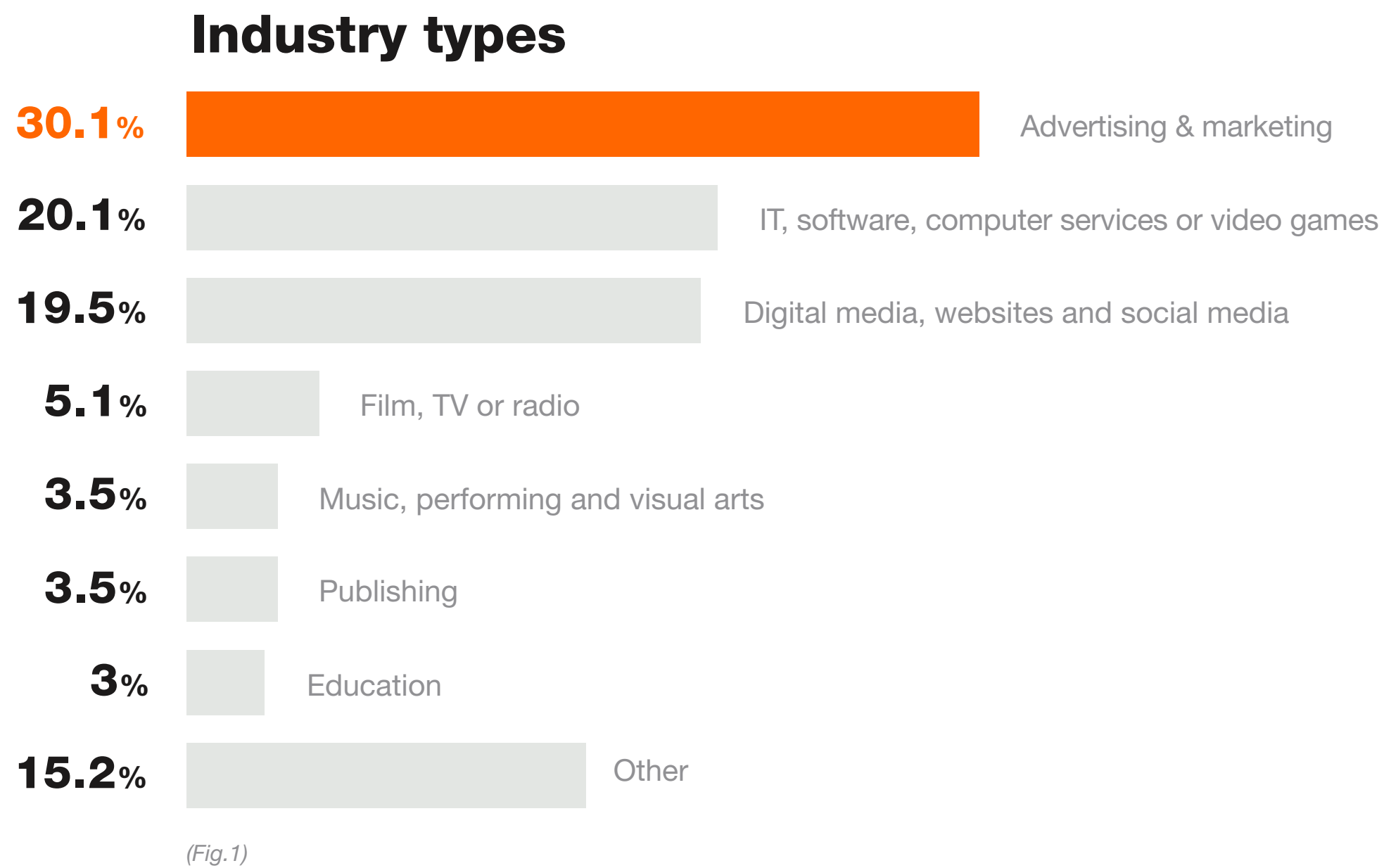
With all of this in mind, **we have identified 5 key takeaways from the research that offers unique insights into the current state of AI in the creative industry.**

“
This feels like a tipping point in time when the people who embrace AI and use it well will prosper.”

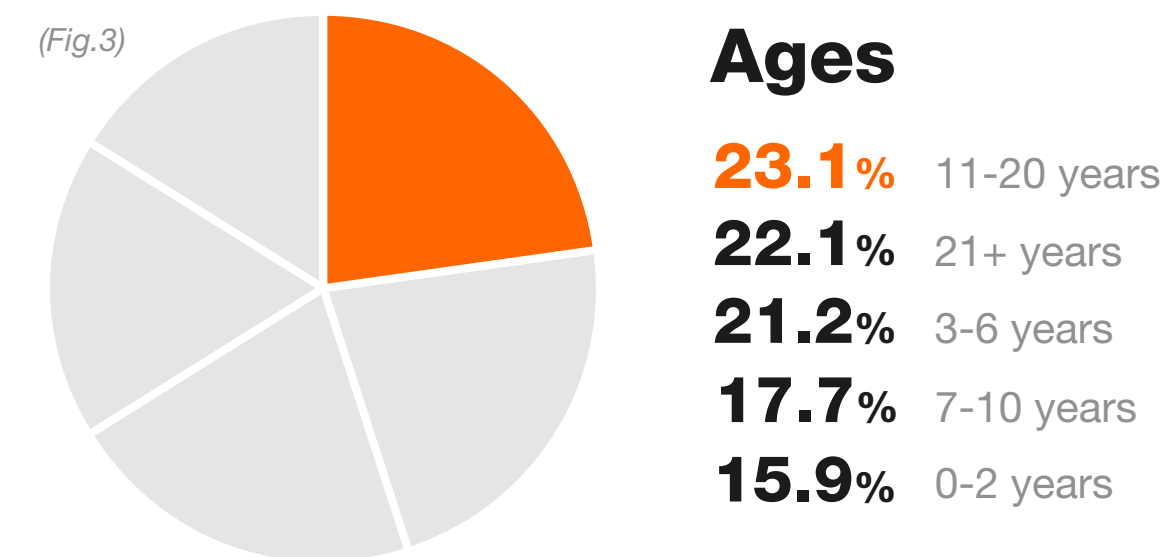
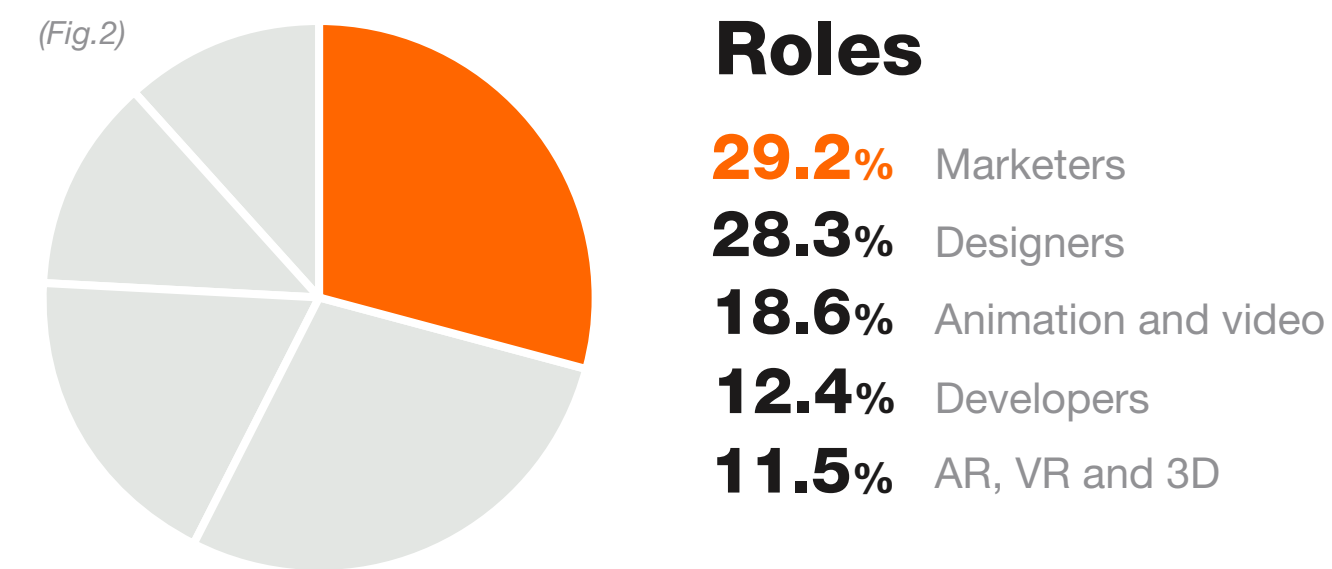


The respondents

Our survey was open throughout February 2023. During this time **113 industry creatives and professionals** contributed. We had a good range of industries respond with advertising and marketing (30.1%), IT, software, computer services or video games (20.1%) and digital media, websites and social media (19.5%) being the largest cohorts (Fig.1).



Within these industries we saw a range of roles with **marketers, designers, animators and video producers** being some of the most popular (Fig.2). We had a good balance of experience with most having 11-20 years, closely followed by 21+ years and 3-6 years. While 7-10 years, and 0-2 years defined the other levels of experience (Fig.3).



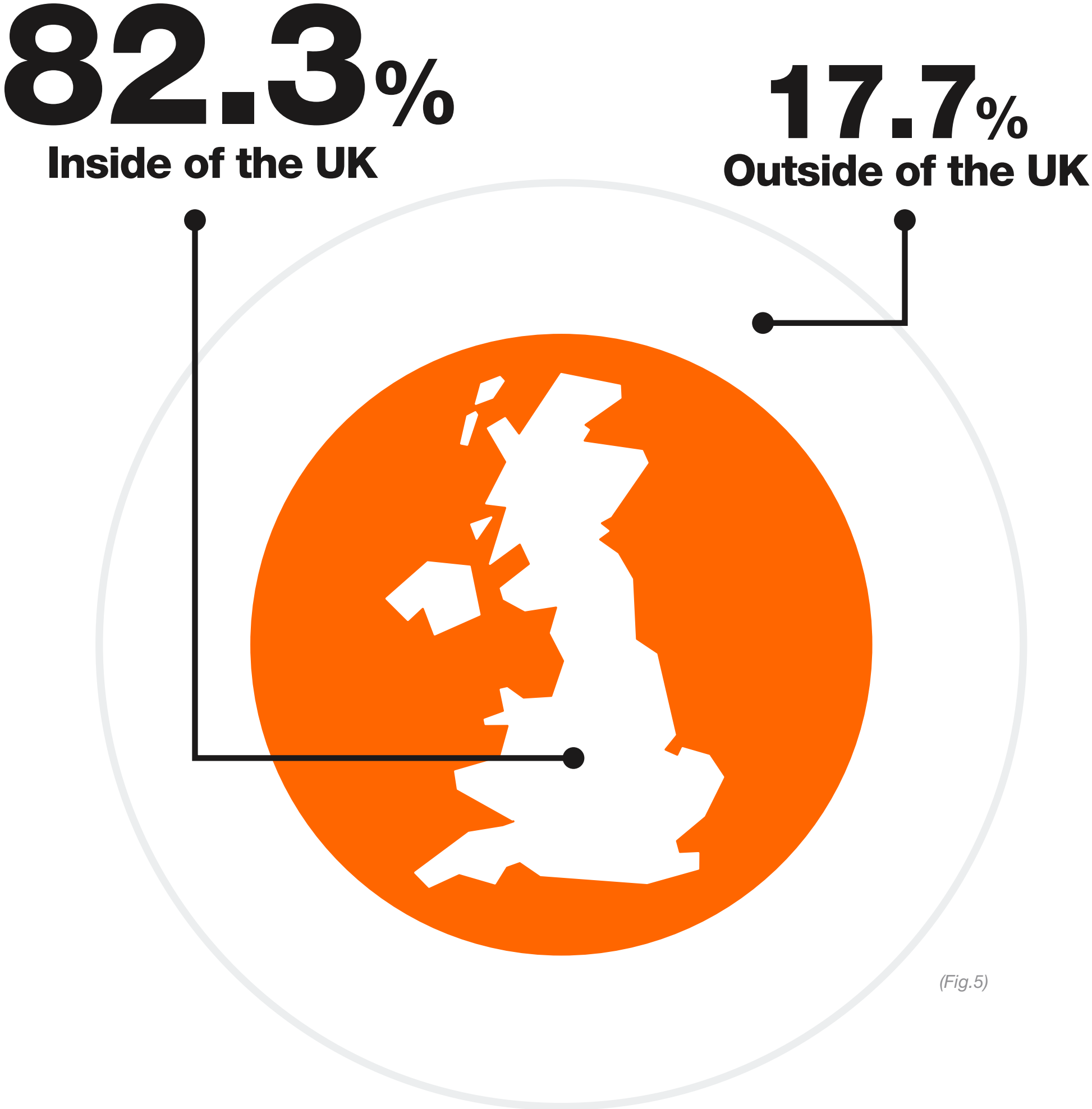
2.1 The respondents

There was a good distribution between ages amongst the respondents, with the least amount being aged between 51-60 years old (11.5%), followed by 41-50 (23.9%), 31-40 (31.9%), and 18-30 (32.7%), with no respondents being over the age of 60 (Fig.4). Respondents were mainly from the United Kingdom (82.3%), and 17.7% were from outside of the UK (Fig.5).

Age distribution



(Fig.4)



(Fig.5)

Introduction

3.1 Introduction

Artificial intelligence is by no means a new concept, but its level of sophistication, power and applications have grown immensely in the last year thanks to wider access to new tools.

The creative industry has seen one of the biggest increases in new AI tools and perceptions of the technology vary from threatening to welcoming.

From the global phenomenon of ChatGPT to the extraordinary visuals of Midjourney, AI tools are becoming more widely used.

Creatives are discovering new ways of utilising or manipulating these AI tools to enhance their workflow, simplify tasks or spark creativity.

These 'pioneers' cannot see a future without the technology, whereas others are choosing to not use these tools as they feel like AI can discredit the integrity of their work, make them feel like they are 'cheating', or that by using AI they lose the human element at the heart of creativity.

At Engine Creative we love to be ahead of the curve, and strive to learn what others think about emerging technologies. We work with a lot of forward thinking clients who recognise the potential in AI and how it can help to grow their business, so we made it our mission to find out what creatives thought about AI and how they think it will impact our industry.



AI is here to stay and it is up to us to learn how to work with the technology to benefit ourselves and the creative industry as a whole.

Andy Wise
Client Services Director

3.2 Introduction

There is no research out there to suggest where AI in the creative industry is going, who is using it, why people are ignoring it and how processes are changing - until now.

We have been working in the creative industry for over 25 years, and we want fellow creatives to understand the impact of AI and how other like minded people are using it.

Adapting to a new technology can be incredibly daunting, but just like calculators not taking away the role of mathematicians and television not destroying the theatre industry, we do not believe AI will replace the creative industry, we just need to adapt.

As well as the statistics, we have also collected qualitative data that highlights the real opinions and attitudes toward AI.

We hope that this research report provides you with as much valuable insight as it did to us, and brings you a better understanding of how AI is impacting the creative industry.



“

AI will likely bring positive and negative disruptions to the creative industry, akin to any new innovative technologies.

Matt Key
Managing Director

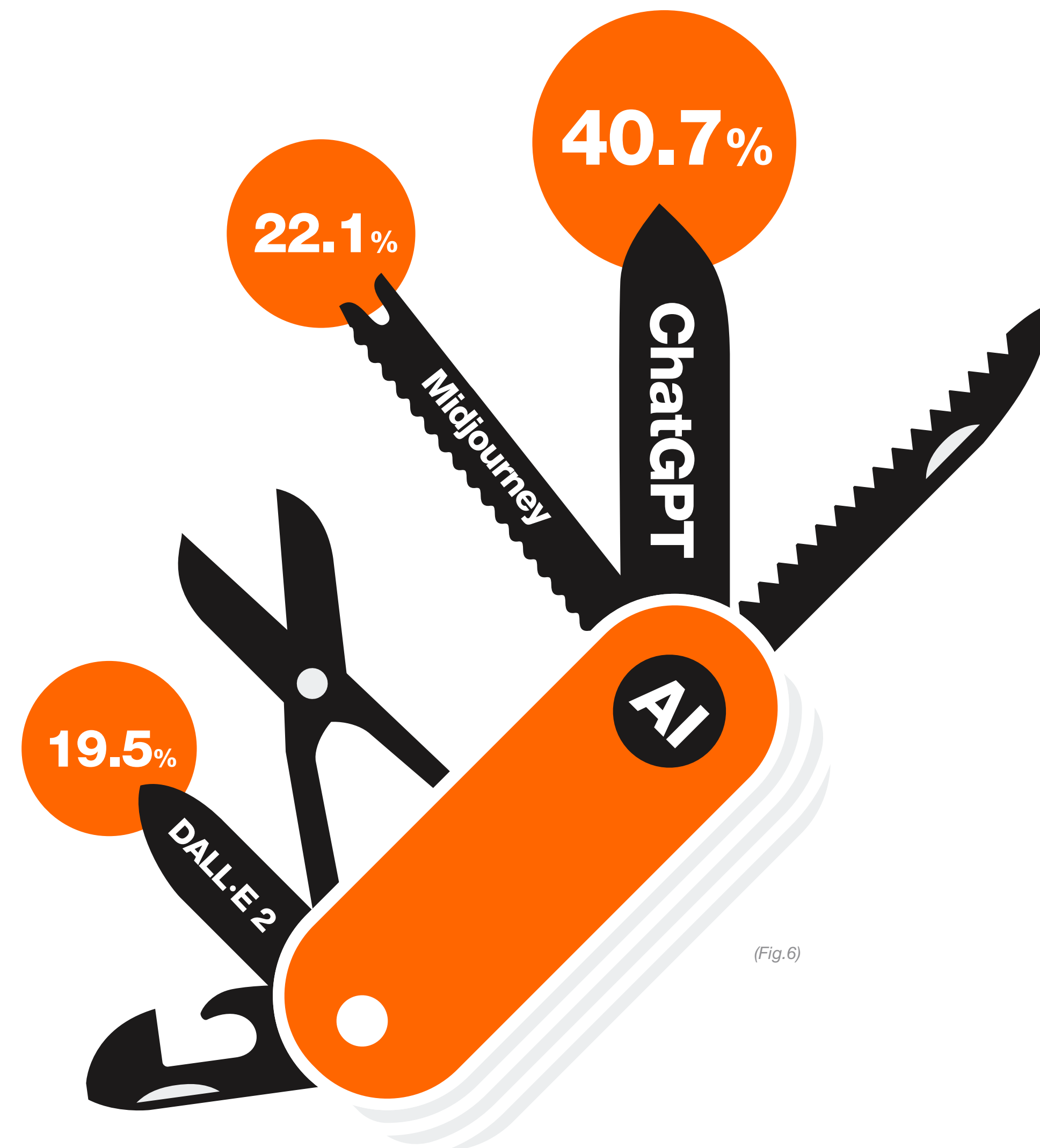
What AI tools do creatives use?

37.2% stated that they have never used AI. The smallest percentage of respondents stated that they use AI all the time (11.5%), followed by 20.4% rarely using it and 31% saying that they use AI tools often.

Respondents who had never used AI stated that they either had not been presented the opportunity, not yet adapted, or decided to neglect the technology.

“I don’t use AI tools. I have full confidence in my abilities and I don’t feel AI at this present time can match my quality of output.”

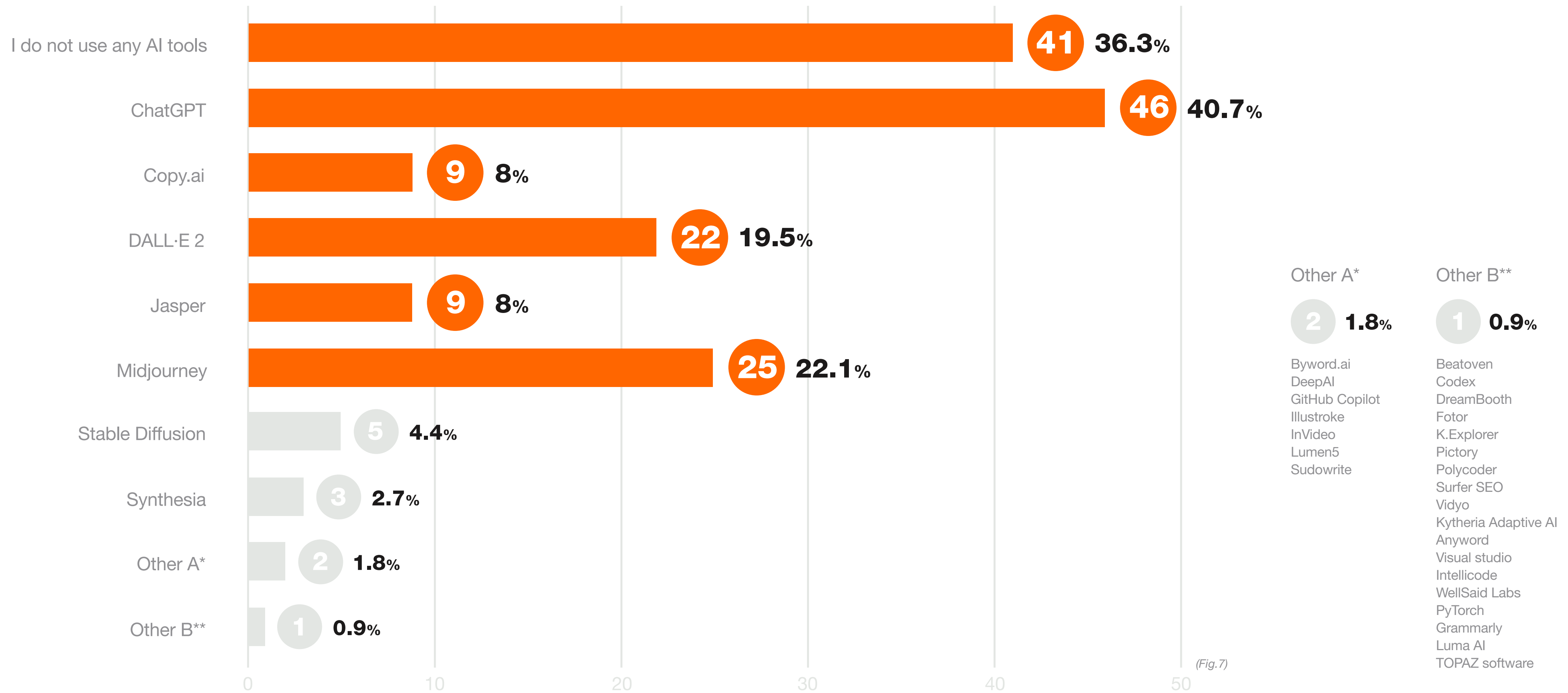
ChatGPT was the most popular AI tool with 40.7% of creatives stating that they use this tool. Other popular tools included DALL·E 2 (19.5%), Copy.ai (8%) and Midjourney (22.1%). Other tools were also used, but only with a small percentage (Fig.6).



(Fig.6)

4.1 What AI tools do creatives use?

AI tools our 113 respondents have used



4.2 What AI tools do creatives use?

Of those that use AI all of the time in their role

69.3%

of them agreed that their favourite tool was ChatGPT

The consensus amongst respondents that use ChatGPT all seem to refer to its usefulness, accuracy and simplicity of use for their reasoning for why it is their favourite.

Of the respondents who stated that they do not use any AI tools, the majority (55%) agreed that they were unsure whether AI would force humans to become more creative.

Reasons for not using AI are split between not having the time or opportunity to begin, those who do not believe it is suited to their role, and those who are afraid of the technology.



ChatGPT has completely changed the way I work and is now a go-to tool for me in my role enabling me to work more efficiently and effectively.

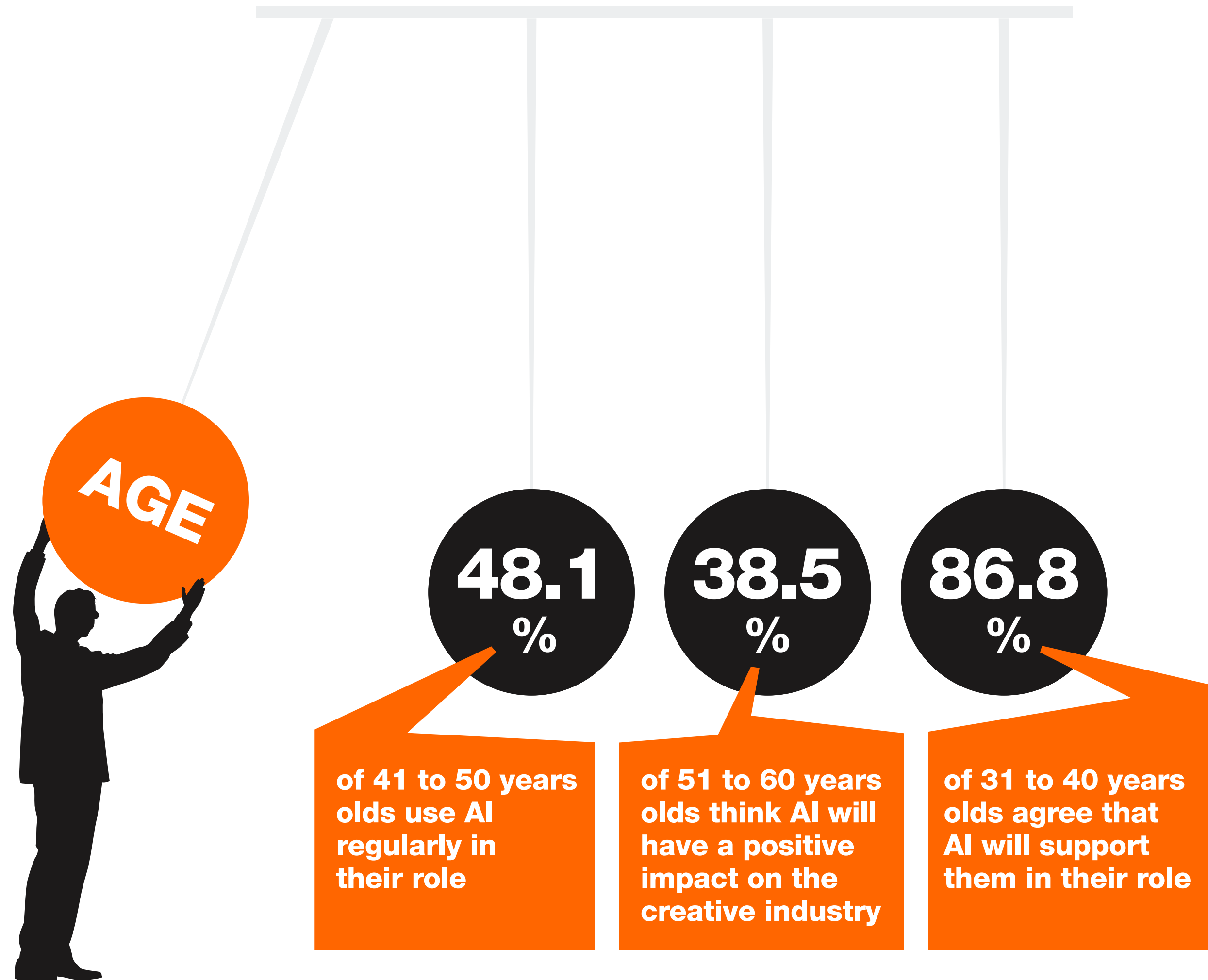
Adam Robinson
Digital Marketing Executive

Does age impact opinion?

Typically, when new technology emerges, it is believed that the younger generations will be the early adopters. But in the case of AI, the older generations are. **Almost half of all 41-60 year olds are using AI** in their role often or all of the time.

Interestingly, despite also believing that AI will support them in their roles, 51-60 year olds see AI as the most threatening to their job security, with 41-50 year olds seeing it as least threatening (Fig.8).

“It’s (AI) inevitable and everyone should start thinking about how to use it.”



(Fig.8)

5.1 Does age impact opinion?

Barely any respondents thought that AI content is better than human content currently, but 44.4% of 51-60 year olds thought that it would be in the future.

18-30 year olds used AI the least in their roles, yet are the most likely to believe that AI will have a positive impact on the creative industry.

Overall, the data suggests that **31-40 year olds are adapting to, and welcoming AI technology the most.**

They are seeing its potential and find the most value in the technology, with 86.6% of them agreeing that AI could support them in their roles.



AI presents amazing opportunities but also poses some unknown risks.

Emma Burden
Studio Manager

Age	% regular use in role	% who think AI could be a threat to their job	% who think AI could support them in the future	% who think AI content is better than human content	% who think AI content will be better than human content in the future	% who think AI will have only a positive impact on industry
18-30	32.4	24.4	67.5	0	18.9	48.6
31-40	47.6	28	86.8	2.8	32.4	42
41-50	48.1	18.5	51.8	3.7	44.4	37
51-60	46.2	30.8	84.7	0	7.7	38.5

= highest % = lowest %

(Fig.9)

6.0 Does experience impact opinions?

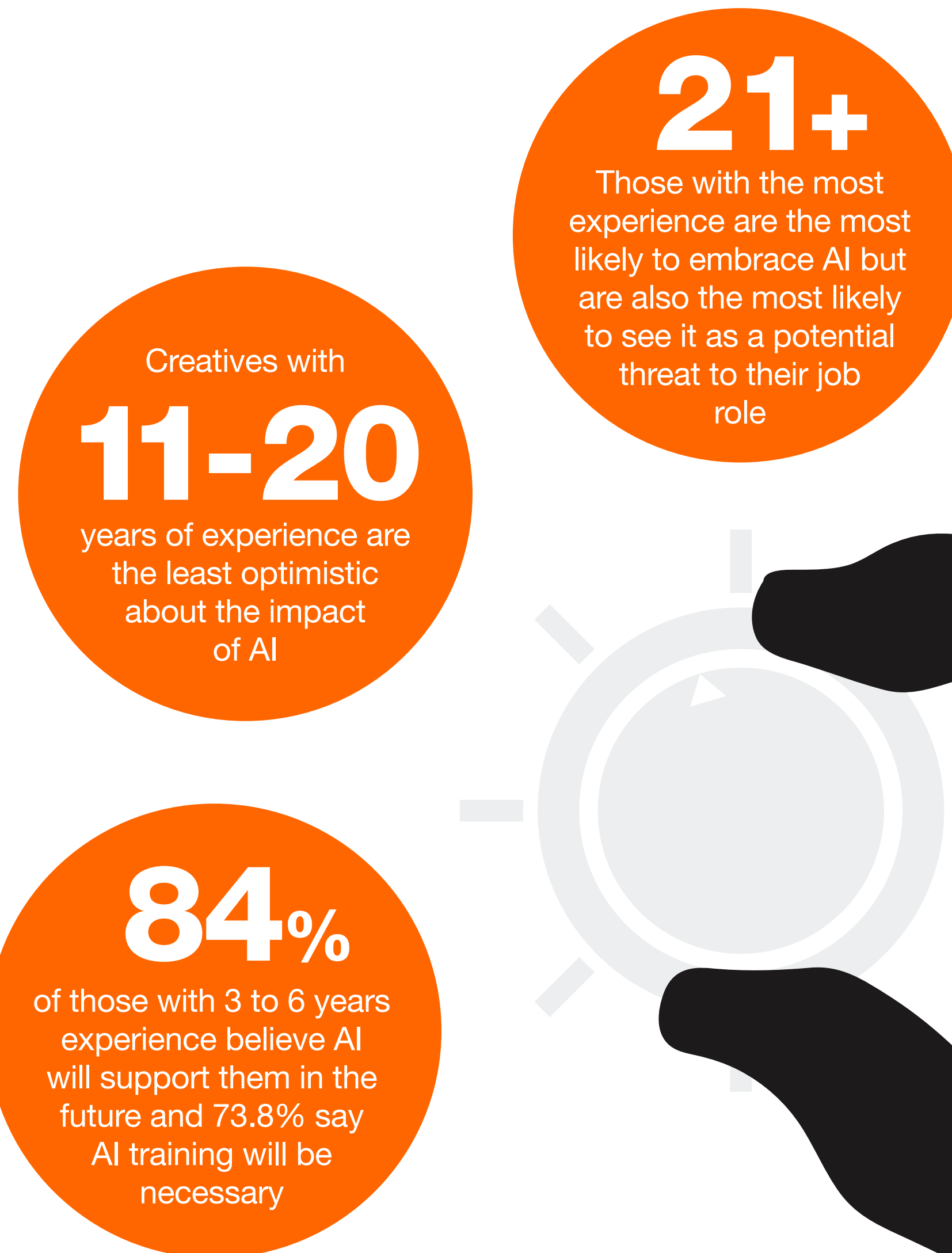
Does experience impact opinions?

Those with over 21+ years of experience not only use AI the most frequently but are also the most welcoming to AI.

Despite this, they also feel threatened by it the most (Fig.10).

“There will be pros and cons for individuals, agencies and brands, but the creative industries need to embrace AI. Change happens, whether you want it to or not, and generally it’s positive overall.”

“I’m now wishing I’d used ChatGPT to write this answer - it probably would have been just as good!”



(Fig.10)

6.1 Does experience impact opinions?

The group who felt least threatened by AI was those with 0-2 years of experience, but this group also thought that AI would support them the least and many of them believed that human content would always be better than AI content.

The 21+ group were the only respondents to state that AI content in its current form is better than human content, but this was still only a small portion of this group (8%).

A total of 43.12% of respondents stated that it was sometimes better, and 55.44% stated that it was not better.

Overall, the data highlights that those with more experience are the ones who have the most confidence in AI improving and having a positive impact on the creative industry.

Age	% regular use in role	% who think AI could be a threat to their job	% who think AI could support them in the future	% who think AI content is better than human content	% who think AI content will be better than human content in the future	% who think AI will have only a positive impact on industry
0-2	44	16.5	60.5	0%	11%	44%
3-6	29.4	25.2	84	0	29.4	54.6
7-10	45	25	70	0	25	35
11-20	42.35	23.1	61.6	0	34.65	34.65
21+	52	32	80	8%	45	55

= highest % = lowest %

(Fig.11)

“
The pace of improvement in generative AI is amazing.
”
 Connie Wrigley
 Junior Designer

Is AI an opportunity or a threat to creatives?

62%
of creatives agree that those who do not embrace AI will fall behind competitors or miss out on opportunities

71.7%
of creatives agreed that AI will help them to streamline or improve their work

38.9%
agree that AI will force humans to become more creative and/or productive

Only **6.2%**
of respondents strongly agreed that AI threatens their job security



7.1 Is AI an opportunity or a threat to creatives?

The majority of creatives (75.3%) disagreed with the following statement: “AI threatens my job security”.

“AI is the future and it’s getting better all the time. As with any change, we have to adapt to work with it rather than fear it.”

74.3%

of creatives agree that AI is going to impact their job roles in some way in the next decade

Most creatives see AI as an opportunity, whilst only a quarter see AI as a threat to their job role.

Both sides present a valid argument, but it also shows the split in opinion of those embracing the technology and those fearing it.

Of the 24.7% that do feel threatened by AI, many of them report bad experiences with AI, or have mentioned that they do not believe that the technology is quite up to standard.

“

I don’t use AI as I believe it is using, stealing and taking away jobs from real people in creative roles.

7.2 Is AI an opportunity or a threat to creatives?

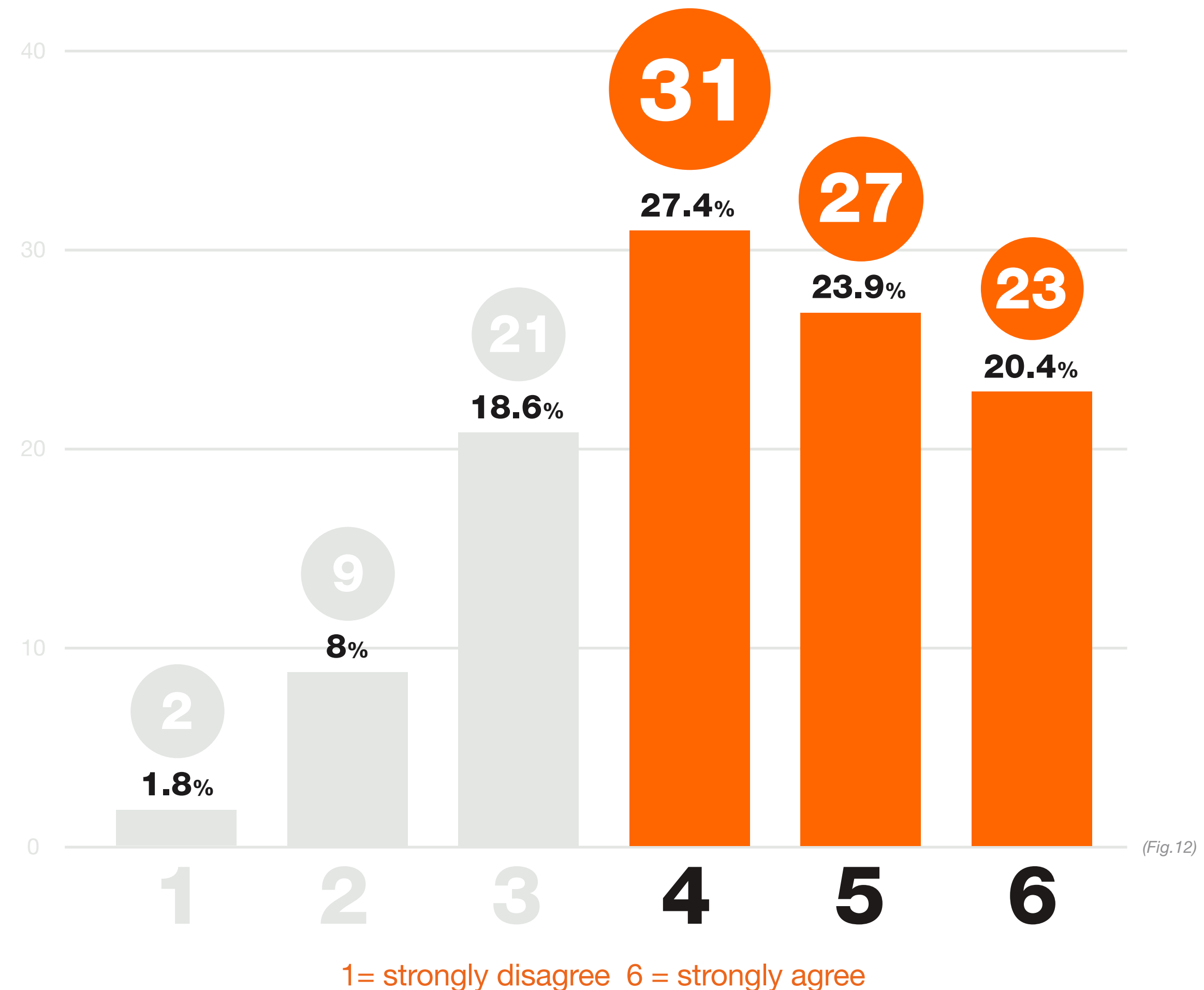
A majority of creatives are willing to utilise AI within their job role.

28.4% of respondents said that they do not believe that AI will support them in their role, whereas 71.6% said that AI would support them (Fig. 12).

Of the respondents that believe AI will support them, 76.3% of them are actively using AI or have used it, whereas only 24.7% do not use any AI tools.

It is difficult to see a future without AI and even the majority of those who do not currently use the technology are aware of its presence within the industry, recognising it will likely become a part of their role.

AI will support me in my role, streamlining processes and/or helping me to produce higher quality work



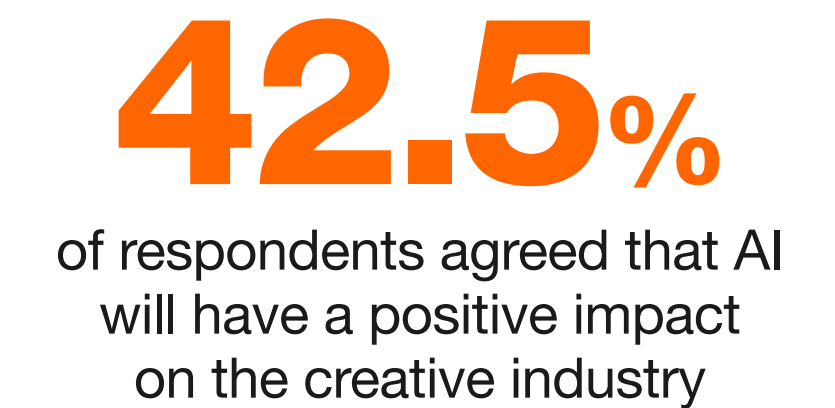
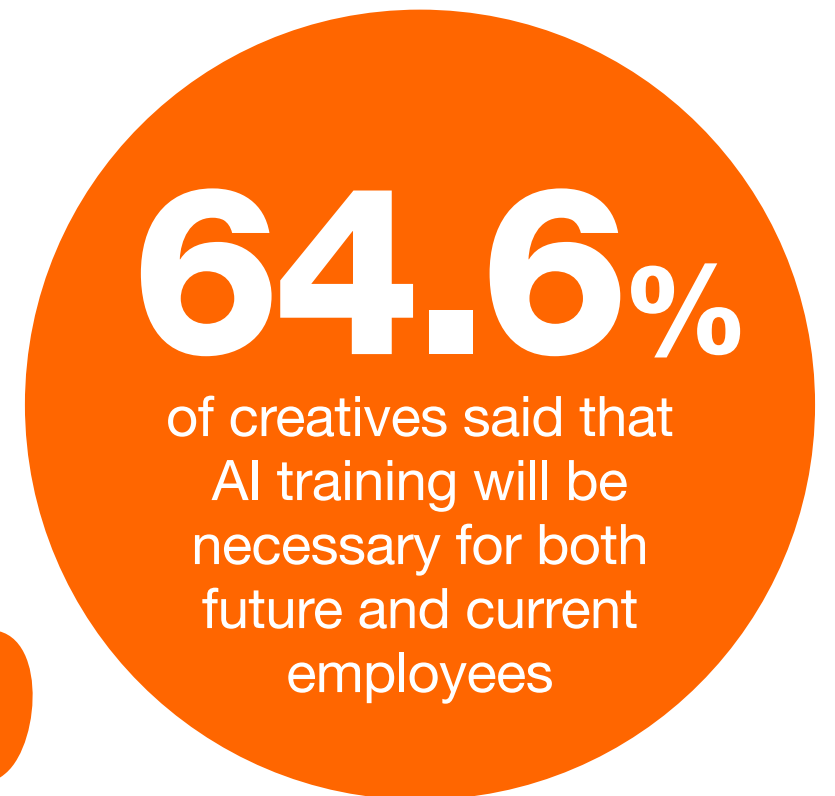
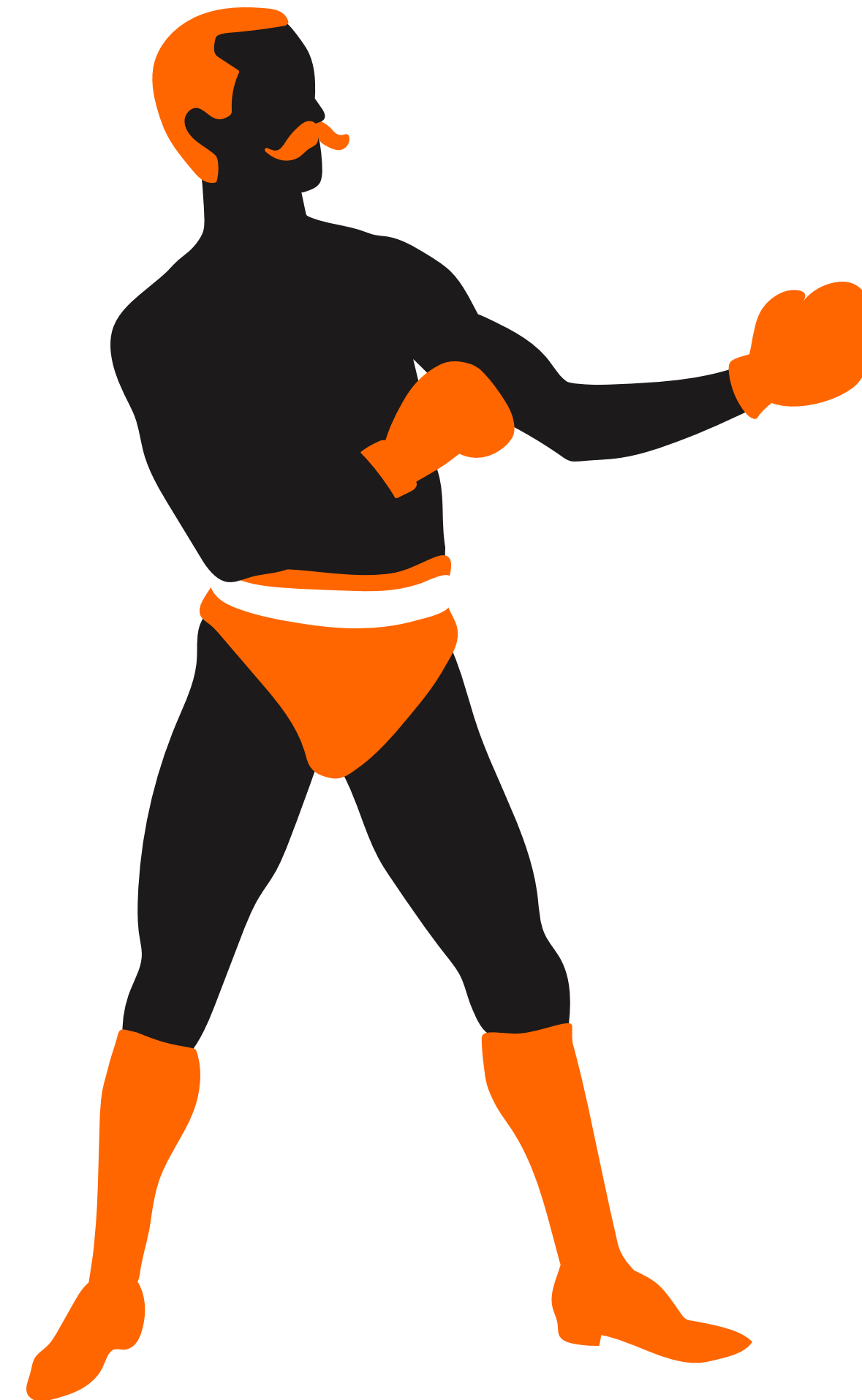
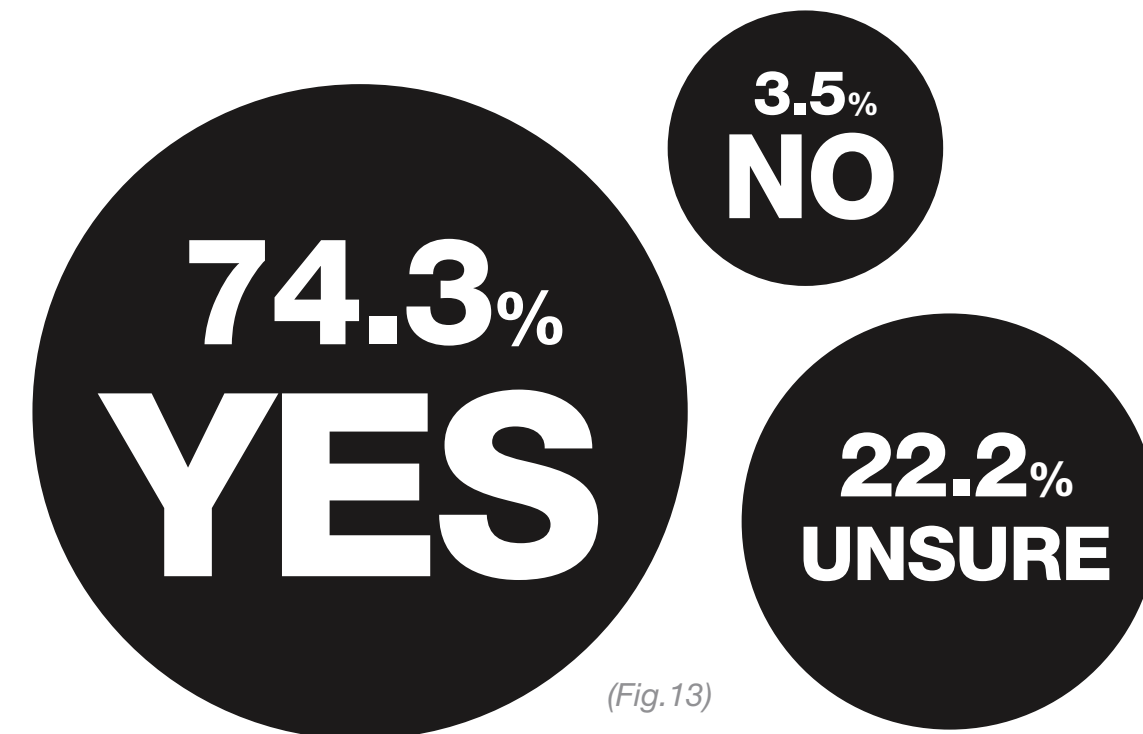
What do creatives think about the future?

The majority of creatives agree (74.3%) that AI will have an impact on their job role in the next decade and only 3.5% said no (Fig.13).

Interestingly, of the 3.5% creatives who stated no, all had job roles where AI is already showing usefulness (coding, copywriting and image creation). All of them also stated that they had never used AI and disagreed that AI threatens their job security.

It is clear that people have very mixed emotions regarding utilising AI within their job role.

Do you think AI will have an impact on your job role in the next decade?



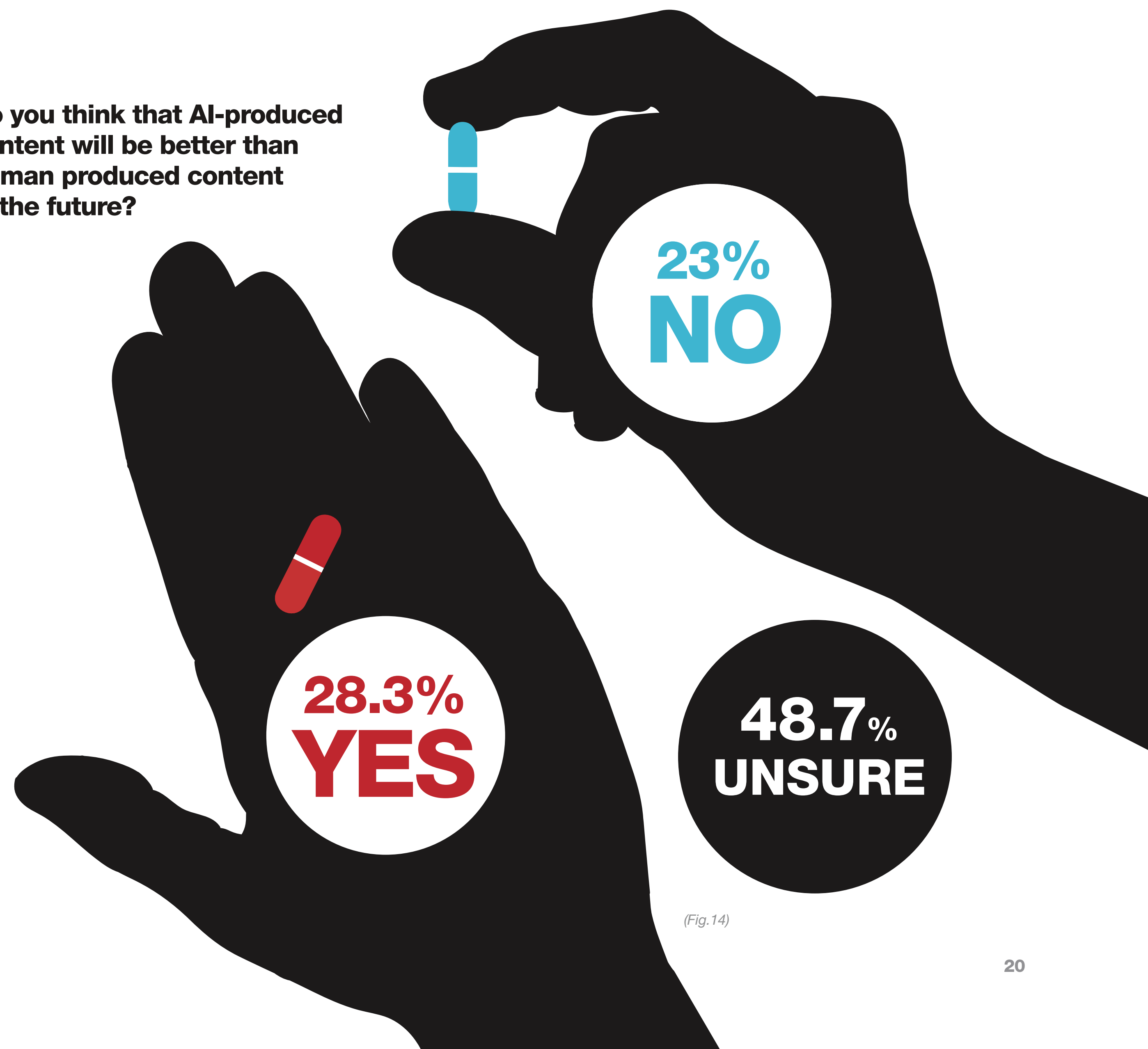
8.1 What do creatives think about the future?

We asked respondents “Do you think that AI-produced content will be better than human produced content in the future?” (Fig. 14).

Notably, many respondents who were unsure about the quality of AI-produced content stated that the main reason was due to the unregulated growth of AI and that they have seen both amazing and poor examples of AI content.

Of the creatives that thought human content will always be better than AI content, 48.1% of them agreed that those who do not incorporate AI into their role will fall to competition and miss opportunities, recognising that AI will likely be a technology they use in their industry.

Do you think that AI-produced content will be better than human produced content in the future?



(Fig. 14)

“

I think that AI is an unstoppable tech force that needs to be embraced by the creative industry in the same way that previous tech advances have had. I also believe that the value of genuine human innovation and creativity will actually be enhanced by the rise of AI as the world gets overloaded with AI content. Be more human.

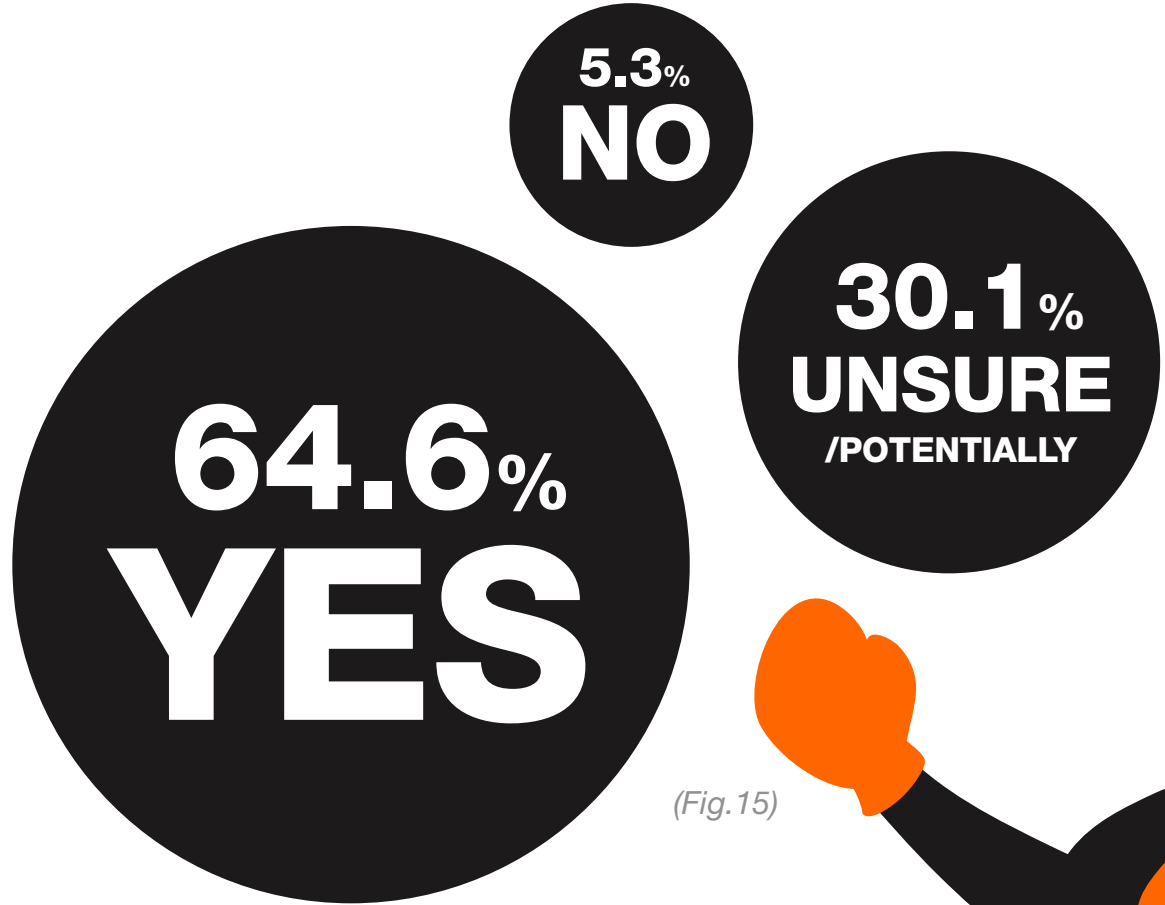
8.3 What do creatives think about the future?

Many creatives recognised the need to embrace AI in the future, and 64.6% of them said that they think AI training will be necessary for both current and future employees (Fig. 15).

Of the creatives who believe that AI training will be necessary in the future, 72% of them also agree that creatives who do not embrace AI will fall behind competition (Fig. 16).

Overall, the majority of creatives agree that AI will impact the future of their industry, and many are willing to embrace the technology within the role.

Those who are not willing to embrace AI, either have never or rarely use AI, or think that human produced content will always be better.



Will AI training be necessary for both current and future employees?

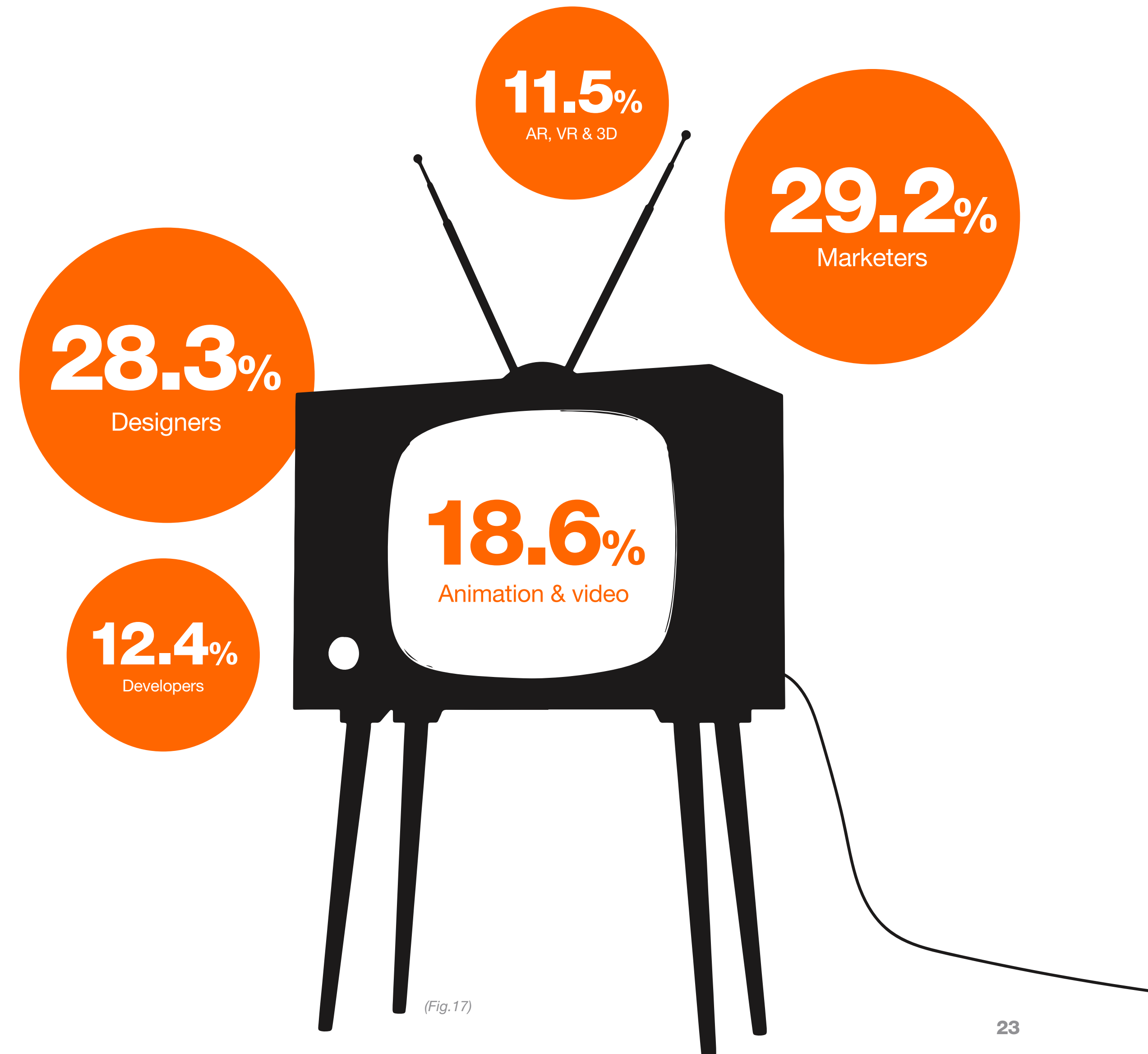


9.0 Do unique roles see AI differently?

Do unique roles see AI differently?

From UI/UX designers to copywriters, the creative industry is filled with different roles, and each will use unique tools and processes, forming different opinions.

We have broken all of our respondents down into 5 separate role categories (*Fig. 17*) to explore the most interesting insights from each.



9.1 Do unique roles see AI differently?

Animation & video

42.9% of animators and video producers use AI on a regular basis. Of those who have used AI, ChatGPT, DALL·E 2 and Midjourney were the most popular.

Those who do not use AI state that they feel AI does not have the capabilities to enhance their work.

70.5% of animators and video producers agreed that AI does not threaten their job security, and 75.2% agreed that AI will support them in their role.

Only 32.9% of respondents thought that AI would force humans to become more creative and of this subgroup, 83.3% of them use AI regularly.

This suggests that those who use AI more often believe AI will push humans to adapt.

There is a split in opinion amongst this group of individuals, with some seeing the capabilities and potential of AI.

“AI does come up with some great and unexpected results and I’m sure it can look analogue. I see AI as being a tool, hopefully, which we can utilise to create better work.”

And those who resent AI.

“AI Artwork is generated from stealing billions of imagery from real people, you cannot class it as artwork as it is an amalgamation of actual artist’s work.”



“

We use text to voiceover AI to quickly get a sense of timing and pacing on video and animation projects before commissioning a VO artist.

Paul Chisholm
Senior Creative

9.2 Do unique roles see AI differently?

AR, VR or 3D

58.3% use AI regularly or all of the time, and 83.3% agree that AI would impact their job roles within the next decade.

This was the group that feared AI the least, with only 8.33% of them strongly agreeing that AI threatens their job security. Those in AR, VR and 3D are also the most likely to already be using AI regularly.

This group were incredibly open-minded when it came to embracing AI, with 91.7% of them agreeing that AI is likely to support them in their roles.

Despite their openness to AI, more than 75% of respondents agreed that AI content would not be better than human produced content in the future.

However, one creative who thought the opposite, thinks the need for human input could diminish very soon.

“With how powerful it already is, I wouldn’t be surprised if in the next 3-5 years it can produce content that doesn’t even need editing.”



“

Having worked on innovative AR, VR and 3D projects for two decades, introducing AI into the production workflow felt like a natural step.

Matt Key
Managing Director

9.3 Do unique roles see AI differently?

Designers

Interestingly, 59.6% of designers agree AI will support them in the future, but 75% stated that they either never or rarely use AI, suggesting that despite the majority of them not seeing it as a valuable tool today, most agree that it will be in the future.

Even with relatively low usage, **it is clear that designers can see the true potential of AI, with many stating that AI and human work are too different to compare, and creatives should stop comparing them as they both provide different value.**

“In my opinion AI is something really amazing but I believe we are making mistakes by comparing AI abilities with human’s. For me AI is more like a supporter, to take things to another level. It shouldn’t be considered as a human brain, they’re totally different things.”

18% of designers believe that AI is going to have a negative impact on the creative industry, with most of them stating that AI will eventually be used to reduce costs and headcounts within businesses.



“

The ability to unlock new creative opportunities and new ways of working using AI is such an exciting prospect for designers.

Dan Smith
Creative Director

9.4 Do unique roles see AI differently?

Developers

No developers stated that they used AI all of the time, suggesting that there is perhaps a lack of trust between developers and AI tools available.

Despite no developers using AI frequently, 71.4% of them agreed that AI will have an impact on their role in the next decade and 78.54% agree that AI does not threaten their job security.

Similar to designers, those developers who are willing to embrace AI see the technology as a supportive tool that can help to increase efficiency within their roles rather than replace them.

Only 42.84% of developers said that AI is going to have a positive impact on the creative industry. But it is important to note that despite this, many developers explained that they believe AI is unstoppable and that whether people like it or not, they will be forced to embrace it.

“Unsure yet how it will impact, I hope it will be more positive than negative, I think it will have an effect on the creative industry a lot quicker than people would expect and do agree it needs to be embraced and learned by creative professionals.”



“

With the release of the OpenAI API, the opportunities to integrate huge AI capability into our development process is a game-changer.

Jarone Parke
Developer

9.5 Do unique roles see AI differently?

Marketers

84.48% of marketers agree that AI will impact their role, suggesting that this role is the most exposed to AI, or the tools for this role are the most sophisticated and offer the most benefits.

75.5% of marketers agree that AI does not threaten their job security, and of this group, 56% stated that those who do not use AI will miss out on opportunities.

Some marketers worry that AI will be generating content from existing AI content, not so much learning, but regurgitating itself.

No marketers thought that current AI content is better than human produced content, and 51.2% believe AI content will never be better than human content.

“The question for me is, when does AI start consuming content and will it then begin to create AI generated content being consumed by AI?”

Although the other segmented roles seem to see that AI has genuine potential, some marketers see beyond this, and believe that AI will be able to produce content similar to that of humans.



“

Although AI is useful, it raises concerns about ethical risks and the misuse of content, which I think needs regulating.

Adam Robinson
Digital Marketing Executive

Key takeaways

10.1 Key takeaways

1. Cautiously optimistic

The creative industry is both pragmatic and relatively positive about the impact of AI in the industry, with little fear for their own role.

Although a small minority do fear the implications of AI, the majority of the creative industry are open to welcoming AI, albeit with certain caveats.

This cautious optimism is both understandable and expected, and stems from the fact that although the industry is starting to adopt AI, and its presence is well-known, the majority are unaware of its future path.

Although no one knows the exact journey AI will take, **those that use AI almost daily have a much more positive and confident outlook on the technology** and see AI as something that everyone needs to adapt to.

Those that use AI less often or infrequently are very aware of the technology, yet are faced with far more uncertainty about the future implications of AI. This suggests that **experience with AI can heavily shift opinion, and those with more experience are more optimistic.**

“

AI is the future and it's getting better all the time. As with any change, we have to adapt to work with it rather than fear it.

10.2 Key takeaways

2. AI as a tool

AI is already a useful tool for improving workflows and processes that will enable more creative work to be produced, but not all creatives are aware of its capabilities in this area.

Research highlighted that the majority of the creative industry has used AI within their role, yet many feel as if it cannot produce to the desired standard.

This implies that those who feel that AI is not yet 'good enough' are using it as an end product tool rather than a supportive one to initiate ideas or spark creativity.

On the other hand, for those creatives who use AI to enhance, rather than to replace or create their work, AI technology is seen as much more valuable tool. This split in opinion was expected considering the relatively early days for AI within the industry.

The creative industry is currently being hit with a tsunami of AI tools, and most of them are not completely straightforward to use, but as time progresses, we predict that more creatives will see AI as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for human creativity.



AI provides us with the opportunity to speed up processes, provide new insights, and deliver higher volumes at greater speeds.

10.3 Key takeaways

3. Embrace the unknown

Although the majority of creatives do not explicitly fear AI, many are unsure of its implications or exact path.

Research highlighted that creatives are incredibly aware that AI is going to impact their job role in the future and they are also aware that we will need to adapt to the AI era, yet many are still unsure whether its impact will be positive or negative.

Despite this feeling of trepidation, the creative industry is still incredibly willing to embrace the technology,

something which it has always done and something which you would hope and expect from an industry that is built on curiosity and innovation.

There are still those that fear AI and will refuse to accept it into their workflow, but it is hard to see a future where this will allow them to survive in the creative industry.

Even those that are unsure of AI, still provided insights into how they believe AI could impact their role and provide new opportunities, with a widespread acknowledgement that change is probably coming sooner than they think.

“

I'm all for technology advancements and AI is happening, you can't hide from it. Better to embrace it and learn at the earliest possible stage or risk being left behind.

10.4 Key takeaways

4. Be more human

Human creativity will still be fundamental to producing great creative outputs in the era of AI.

Although AI could replace some jobs in theory, it is incredibly likely that roles may just change and some new roles will be created.

For those that use AI, it is used as a supportive tool to help nurture ideas and spark creative influence, with AI content rarely being used as an end product. Most recognise that this could change in the future, but still believe that **humans will still play a vital role and provide a level of authenticity and touch that AI technology could simply not match.**

Advocates for AI consistently stated that AI is a tool to be embraced, not feared, but those who ignore, are likely to fall behind.

We asked respondents to compare AI and human content in two of our questions. The majority had the same responses and felt that AI content is not better than human content now, but may be in the future.

Despite this, it was overwhelming how many stated that **human input, human guidance, and human thinking will remain central to truly original creative output.**

“
AI should augment, inspire and inform but not replace human creative skill.”

5. Imitation or innovation?

The ethics around intellectual property (IP) will become a battleground for those in the creative industry.

Creatives are already finding it difficult to work out what content can or cannot be used when it has been produced by AI. One of the main concerns is that AI-generated content could infringe upon the IP rights of human creators.

To address these concerns, **it is important for creators to consider the ethical implications of using AI in creative fields.** This includes ensuring that AI-generated content is sufficiently original and distinct from existing works, and that the IP rights of human creators are protected.

There is also a concept that AI simply steals human ideas, content, and creativity and respondents highlighted that there is also the fear that AI will simply regurgitate other AI content (sourced from human-created data), meaning that it will lead to a world awash with poor quality AI-generated content.

Despite these concerns, the general consensus is that AI as a creative tool will evolve to address these issues, with more diverse and higher quality training data to draw upon, greater emphasis on human guidance and more nuanced prompt tools, and sophisticated AI models that detect plagiarism and provide better outputs.

“

The better it gets then the more likely it is to raise some pretty difficult and important philosophical questions about the nature of human art and creativity.



**Engine Creative have been bringing
brands to life since 1997.**

Digital innovation is in our DNA and we make sure that our clients harness the very latest technology to enhance products, services, processes, and culture to design new and improved ways of doing things.

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