

FINDING THE **HUMAN EDGE**

WHERE TALENT MEETS TECHNOLOGY

IS YOUR BRAND FUTURE-PROOF?

This year has been nothing short of transformative for creative and marketing teams, with AI and technology reshaping how we hire, manage, and collaborate. As we've navigated these changes, Creative Circle has had countless conversations with clients and freelancers about the opportunities — and challenges — that AI and tech bring.

From the meteoric rise of ChatGPT to the seamless integration of artificial intelligence into our everyday marketing tools — be they writing and design tools, email systems, CRMs, or marketing automation platforms — the latest tech revolution has not just reshaped our work environment; it has redefined it.

As we look ahead, the pace of change shows no signs of slowing. So the question becomes — how is your business differentiating itself now that the technology is accessible to everyone? The answer for top-performing companies in 2025 is the talent you hire to wield the technology with skill and creativity.

So, what should you be focusing on as you shape your talent strategy for the upcoming year? From scaling personalized content to integrating AI into creative workflows, we've dug deep to uncover what works and what doesn't. This report captures those insights and ideas that will help you stay ahead. Let us be your guide as you navigate the intersection of talent and technology in 2025.

Katherine Forbes
SVP Marketing, Creative Circle

**We still believe people
are best at connecting
you with people.**

READY TO HIRE?

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THE IMPACT OF AI & TECHNOLOGY ON THE HIRING PROCESS

AI has reshaped the job application process. Candidates are using AI to craft resumes, cover letters, and portfolios, plus to find openings that fit their preferences. "I've used AI tools to enhance my job search and application process. From using tailored prompts to refine my resume and cover letters to leveraging AI-powered platforms for job alerts and role matching, it's improved relevance and efficiency," [Laura Gagliardi](#), Creative Circle candidate.

This is resulting in increased application volume for each open role, threatening to overwhelm traditional recruitment processes. [The recruiting platform Ashby reported](#) that job applications for business roles have tripled over the last three years. Predictably, employers are reacting to this surge in applications by leveraging their own technology to assess them. Applicant tracking systems have been in use for years, and as they add new AI capabilities, they are taking on more and more of the tasks that human recruiters used to handle. Machine learning algorithms can quickly assess skills and experience to enhance the quality of matches while reducing bias, and predictive analytics help employers forecast hiring needs and prepare for talent gaps.

But these systems are far from perfect. While AI-enabled applicant tracking systems can lift some burdens from the shoulders of overwhelmed hiring teams, the smartest organizations continue to take a human-centered approach to recruitment. AI lacks the intuition and empathy needed to fully assess a candidate's cultural fit and unique qualities, making human involvement essential to balance AI-driven insights with judgment, ensuring fair and impactful hiring decisions. Building a team is too nuanced and important of a task to offload to the machines just yet.

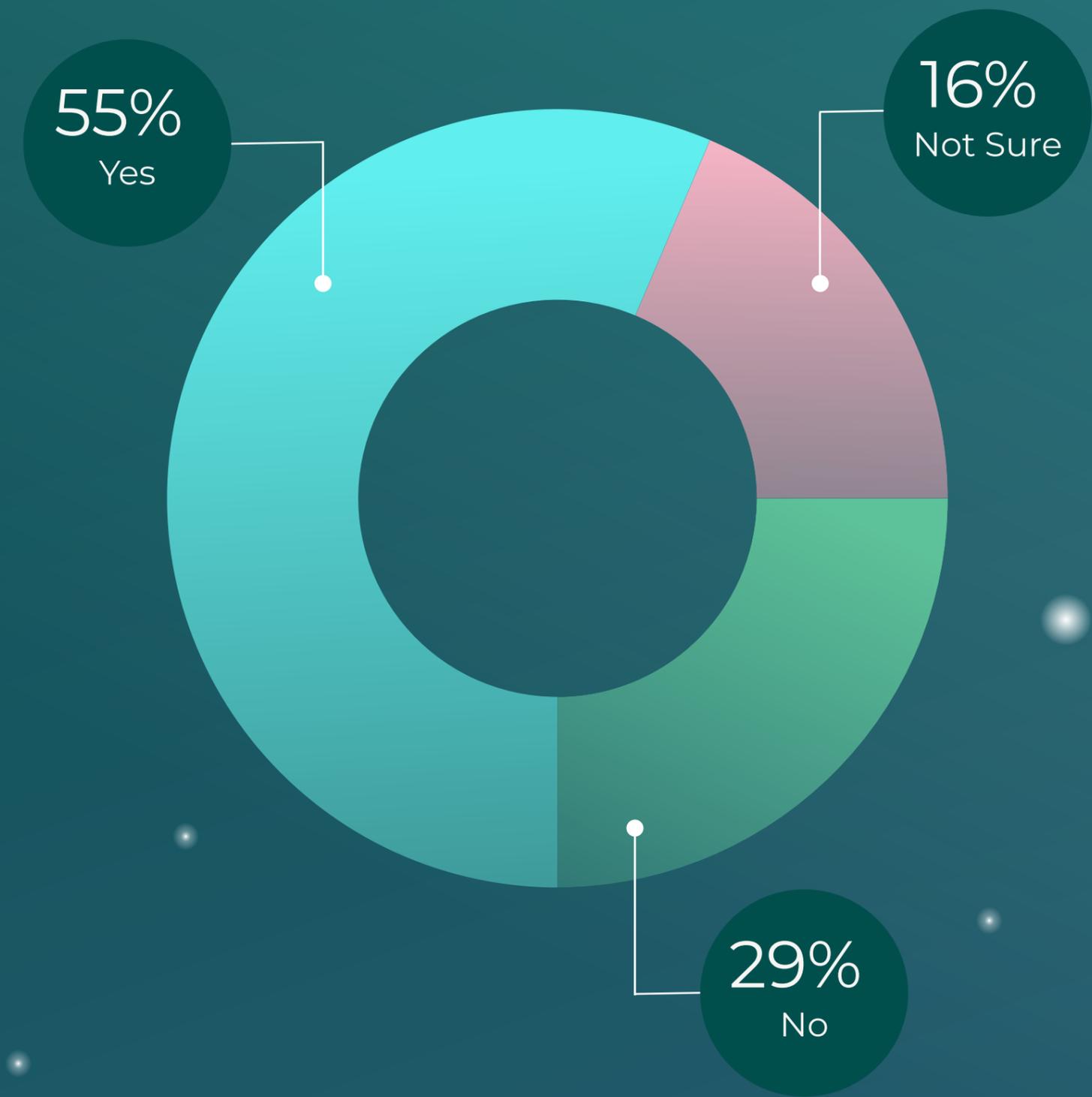
There is an art and science to hiring, and **AI is only half of the equation.** Human oversight is still critical to the hiring process.



LAUREN FERRARA
SVP OF RECRUITING & DELIVERY OPERATIONS,
CREATIVE CIRCLE

USING AI TO APPLY?

In Q4 2024, Creative Circle asked 1,940 candidates if they were going to use AI to apply to jobs in 2025



THE IMPACT OF AI & TECHNOLOGY ON MARKETING/CREATIVE WORK

Technology doesn't just affect how marketing and creative teams are assembled, of course. It's also having a massive impact on how the work itself gets done.

In 2024, many marketing and creative tasks were offloaded to AI and other emerging technologies. This affected headcount and the quality of work. AI tools were used for content creation, design automation, and data analysis, among other tasks. For instance, AI-powered content generators can produce articles, social media posts, and even video scripts, freeing up human creatives to focus on more strategic and high-level tasks.

But the integration of AI into marketing and creative work has not been without its challenges. Some companies have struggled to find the right balance between human creativity and AI efficiency. There have been instances where over-reliance on AI has led to a decline in the quality of creative output, as the human touch and nuanced understanding of audience preferences were missing.

As ever more impressive technology emerges in 2025, it will become increasingly capable of handling complex tasks that were previously thought to be the exclusive domain of humans. For example, AI-driven tools will be able to create highly personalized marketing campaigns, analyze vast amounts of data to uncover hidden insights, and even predict future trends with greater accuracy. However, the strategic direction and creative vision behind these campaigns will still need to come from human marketers.

"For the foreseeable future, humans will be far superior at creating and defining strategies, as well as in using reasoning to tie abstract ideas from one industry or discipline or another," says marketing technology consultant [Greg Kihlström](#). "Humans will continue to have the vision while AI will continue to play a bigger role on the execution, and that is really focusing both humans and AI on what each do best. Humans will find more purpose and value in their work, and AI will automate and reduce errors in things that humans both don't like and aren't particularly good at in the first place."

"Humans will remain invaluable in areas requiring empathy, critical thinking, and complex problem-solving — essentially, the nuanced understanding of human experiences and emotions that AI can't replicate," adds Laura. "The top skills to develop are emotional intelligence, creativity, adaptability, and strategic thinking. Employers will increasingly value individuals who can interpret AI-driven data, contextualize it, and apply it to real-world challenges while maintaining a human touch in decision-making."

DRIVEN BY TALENT, POWERED BY TECHNOLOGY: TIPS FOR STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE

01. Integrate

Ensure all tools are fully integrated to provide a unified view of customer data.

02. Align

Align your tech stack with business objectives and ensure it is flexible enough to scale.

03. Upskill

Invest in continuous learning opportunities for your team to keep up with technological advancements.

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GREG KIHLSSTRÖM
MARKETING TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT

TOOLS POWERING YOUR TEAM IN 2025

01. AI-Driven Content Creation Tools

Canva: A versatile design tool that allows you to create graphics, presentations, social media posts, and more. It's user-friendly and offers a wide range of templates and design elements.

Adobe Creative Cloud: This suite includes powerful tools like Photoshop, Illustrator, and Premiere Pro, which are industry standards for graphic design, video editing, and more.

Runway: Runway is an AI-powered video platform that enables fast, high-fidelity, and controllable video generation, revolutionizing creativity in art, entertainment, and media.

Midjourney: Midjourney is an AI-powered platform that transforms text descriptions into detailed and imaginative visual images, offering a unique tool for artists, designers, and creators.

ElevenLabs: ElevenLabs is an AI-driven voice platform that creates highly realistic and customizable synthetic voices for various applications, including audiobooks, video voiceovers, and more.

02. Advanced CRM Systems with Predictive Analytics

HubSpot CRM: Offers robust marketing analytics and predictive tools to enhance customer engagement and conversion rates.

Salesforce Einstein: Integrates AI to provide predictive analytics, helping improve sales forecasts and identify growth opportunities.

Microsoft Dynamics 365: Provides built-in AI and analytics tools, including Power BI, for smarter decision-making and predictive analysis.

Zoho CRM: Includes advanced analytics and AI-driven insights to help businesses make data-driven decisions.

Freshworks Neo: Offers predictive analytics to optimize sales.

03. Marketing Automation Platforms with Enhanced Personalization

HubSpot Marketing Hub: Known for its comprehensive suite of tools, HubSpot offers advanced personalization options for email marketing, landing pages, and customer journeys.

Salesforce Pardot: Ideal for B2B marketing, Pardot provides robust automation and personalization features, including dynamic content and AI-driven insights.

Marketo Engage: Part of Adobe Experience Cloud, Marketo is renowned for its advanced personalization capabilities, allowing marketers to create highly targeted campaigns.

Eloqua: Eloqua provides tools to help marketers align their marketing efforts with the sales team, such as lead management and lead scoring capabilities.

Mailchimp: Popular among small to medium-sized businesses, Mailchimp offers extensive personalization options, including predictive analytics and dynamic content.

AI has transformed my work as a content strategist, helping with **research, idea generation, and content creation**. I use it daily for feedback analysis, trend identification, and quick iterations to **optimize user experience**.



LAURA GAGLIARDI
CONVERSATIONAL
CONTENT DESIGNER

THE IMPORTANCE OF A DEFINED MARKETING TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

2025 is going to bring a blizzard of technological advancement and evolution. In order to survive or even thrive, it will be essential for marketing leaders to have a clearly defined marketing technology strategy. Companies need tools that work together seamlessly and do not burden humans with administrative tasks.

“Companies often face several challenges with their martech stacks, such as platform integration issues, underutilized tools, and data silos,” says Lauren, svp of recruiting & delivery operations, Creative Circle.

“Rapid technological advancements also make it difficult for companies to stay up-to-date, and many lack the in-house expertise to fully leverage complex tools. Additionally, aligning capabilities with business goals can be challenging without clear strategies.

“This is where a strong talent strategy can help! Skilled talent, including integration experts, data analysts, creative and marketing experts, and digital strategists can ensure that tools are well-integrated and fully optimized to drive ROI. Building a team with both technical and strategic expertise enables companies to harness the full potential of their tech stacks.”

DRIVEN BY TALENT, POWERED BY TECHNOLOGY: TIPS FOR STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE

01. Identify **Skillset Gaps**

Start by identifying the specific skills needed to make the most of your tech stack, such as data analysis, platform integration, and digital strategy. Hiring talent with both technical and strategic marketing expertise ensures that you're not just maintaining your stack but truly optimizing it for results.

02. Look at **the Data**

Hire or upskill team members who can bridge gaps between IT, marketing, creative, and operations, enabling smoother integration and use of tools across departments. This creates a seamless flow of data and insights that inform better decision-making.

03. Build **Your Bench**

Leverage analytics to identify gaps in your tech utilization and target hiring accordingly. This data-driven approach ensures your talent strategy is directly aligned with your tech needs, optimizing both your stack and your team's performance.

YOUR KEY TO 2025 SUCCESS

As we move into 2025, the challenge for marketing and creative leaders will be to thread the needle with humans and technology for maximum impact. The top companies will be those who build a synchronous, well-defined, constantly evolving technology stack and put it to work with the right team of people.

“My advice to employers would be to lean into the capabilities of AI but not lose sight of the human element,” says Laura. “Invest in continuous learning opportunities for your team, foster a culture of innovation, and prioritize inclusivity. In a world where technology is rapidly evolving, creating a space where employees feel empowered to experiment and adapt will be crucial. Finally, value the skills that can’t be automated — compassion, intuition, and the ability to build meaningful human connections.”

Ready to take your team and technology to the next level? Explore the resources below to discover tools, insights, and strategies to help you build a seamless blend of human talent and AI-driven innovation.

[BUILD YOUR TEAM IN THE AGE OF AI](#)

[CREATIVE CIRCLE'S AI GLOSSARY](#)

[REQUEST TALENT](#)

My advice to employers would be to **not get too distracted by the AI hype** and still hire talent for the strategy, creative, writing, and other core skills needed for the role.

GREG KIHLSSTRÖM
MARKETING TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT

