

AI questions to ask your agency

A marketer's discussion guide

Google recently conducted [research with BCG, surveying over 840 agencies in 14 markets](#), and found that [leading agencies are adopting 7 key behaviors to stay competitive in the AI era](#): upskilling talent, using data to power AI models, investing in AI for creative, putting data & tech at the center of their offering, shifting their commercialization model, reducing costs and scaling AI solutions across clients. [This discussion guide helps marketers have valuable conversations with their agencies](#) to better understand an agency's perspective, approach, and vision around AI, plus how to best partner and leverage AI to unlock greater growth and effectiveness for the business.

Leading agencies in the AI era are:

Questions to ask your agencies:



What “good” looks like:



Investing in upskilling their talent, hiring AI specialists and integrating previously siloed functions like creative & media

How are you training your team to effectively use AI tools and how are you adapting your organizational structure to leverage AI? How are you defining the optimal division of labor between human talent and AI capabilities?

- The agency has a **clear plan for upskilling existing staff**, redefining their entry level programs to adapt to new and required skill sets, and and they're hiring new talent with AI expertise where necessary.
- They are **integrating creative and media units** vs. going to market separately.
- They're **leveraging AI for operational tasks**, and they're clear about where the human-touch is non-negotiable.
- They're **keen on experimentation frameworks that will propel them forward**, and they leverage AI throughout the process - from strategy to ideation to execution to measurement.



Using data to power strong AI models across insights, media and creative

How are you rethinking your approach to data? How will your AI solution connect to our data, and how do you ensure privacy and security?






- They see **AI-powered data as a key differentiating factor in their AI maturity**, and they have the ability to bring together diverse data sets, including client data, safely and securely.
- They're focused on **transparent attribution** for accurate measurement.
- The agency proves that **its AI models are improving by regularly testing** them and tracking performance benchmarks.



Heavily invested in AI throughout the creative process while keeping the human at the center

How are you approaching AI in the creative process? How do you ensure brand safety within the context of asset creation at scale?

- They **demonstrate human talent and creative leadership** while leveraging AI throughout the entirety of the creative process – not just one step.
- **Use cases include:** audience persona development, personalizing creative at scale, identifying real time trends to inform assets, analyzing creative for effectiveness, and more.

Leading agencies in the AI era are:	Questions to ask your agencies:	 What “good” looks like:
 Putting data and tech at the center of their value proposition, partnering with multiple cloud providers & co-creating AI solutions with tech partners	How are you diversifying your tech and data investments across platforms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They create a strategic tech stack that operates in a multi-cloud world with platform-specific experts, allowing them to build out AI application layers to allow for customized solutions. They balance in-house tech builds, co-creation with tech partners and integrating outside tech that will benefit the future of their business.
 Shifting their commercialization model to an outcomes-based model	How are you thinking about transforming your commercialization model? What are the ways you measure outcomes and how does AI enable this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency is moving away from billable hour models and is shifting their structure to an outcomes-based model, and they’re exploring pay-for-performance models
 Reducing costs with efficient AI workflows	How are you lowering costs with AI? Where have you found efficiencies with AI and how did you incorporate it systematically into your client workflows?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency is investing in AI for internal operations to find efficiencies internally. They create orchestrated AI operations vs. isolated AI workflows to drive efficiency at scale.
 Scaling AI solutions and investing in strong pilots	How are you scaling effective AI solutions and avoiding getting stuck in the pilot phase?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They offer co-funded pilots to their clients and commit to value and ROI targets. They have a clear framework for piloting, graduating and scaling new solutions. They test AI-powered formats to stay ahead.

Next steps

01

Use the insights from these conversations

to establish a baseline of your agency’s approach to AI.

02

Organize regular sprints

with your agency, using AI tools, to work better and faster together.

03

Identify opportunities for measurable pilots

to deploy, test and learn – assessing the impact of AI to drive toward top business priorities.