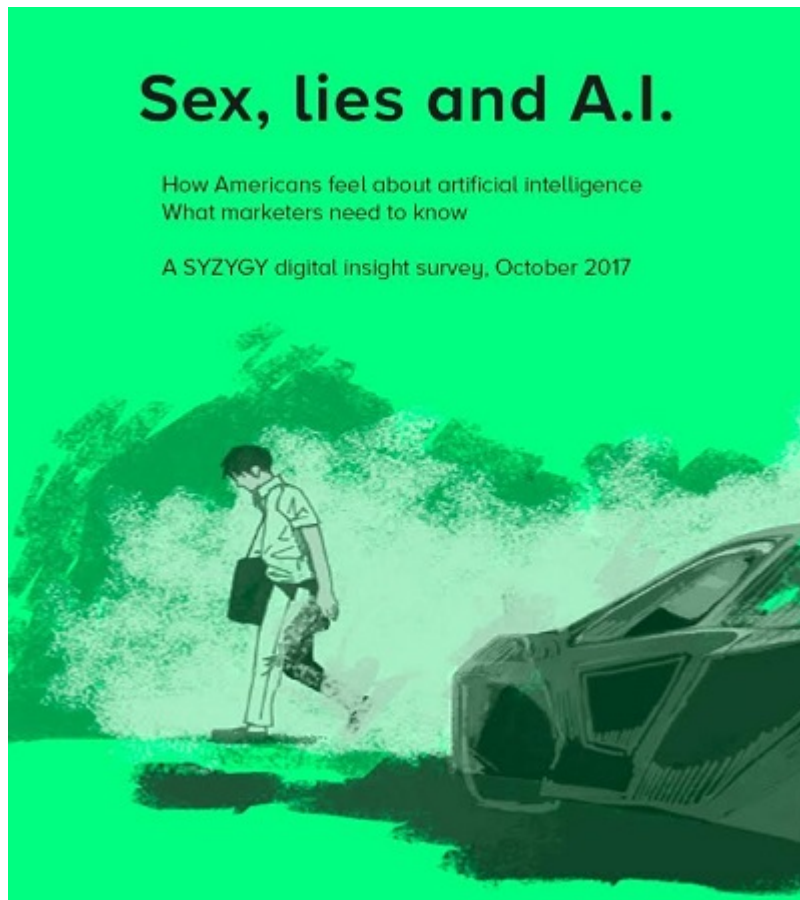


How To Overcome AI Fears, and Design What Americans Want



Wendy Glavin, Founder and CEO, [Wendy Glavin Agency](#)

We've heard about the threat of AI from fake news and voice bots, to job loss, and economic inequality as middle-skilled structured, and routine information tasks are eliminated and weapons of mass destruction, driverless cars, and more.

Many experts, including, Elon Musk, Stephen Hawking, Steve Wozniak, Bill Gates, and scientists are worried about machines becoming super intelligent, and taking over the world, if not regulated by humans.

[University of Oxford](#) philosopher [Nick Bostrom](#) defines *superintelligence* as "an intellect that is much smarter than the best human brains in practically every field, including scientific creativity, general wisdom and social skills."

But, “Machines don’t have “a mind of its own’ – it has the mind of a programmer. Alexa doesn’t even understand the context of a conversation,” reported John Brandon, July 7, 2017:

<https://venturebeat.com/2017/07/26/why-elon-musk-is-wrong-about-mark-zuckerberg-and-vice-versa/>

[SYZYGY](#), an award-winning global digital marketing agency group, based in New York, conducted a digital AI insight survey* August, 2017, “Sex, Lies, and AI – How Americans feel about artificial intelligence.” The survey revealed widespread public interest, and openness to artificial intelligence (AI) in the U.S. While more than two-thirds of respondents are open to businesses, and brands using AI to communicate with, and serve them, U.S marketers need to overcome widespread skepticism about the benefits of AI technology.

To obtain a deeper understanding, SYZYGY asked people to think about AI and share their feelings. Dominant emotions evoked by AI are hopeful, interested, concerned, suspicions, and skeptical about its claims. 36% rated their feelings as neutral, 24% as mildly positive, and 26% as mildly negative.

Marketers who are promoting or using AI will need to deal with widespread skepticism, suspicion and ambivalence towards AI. People need clear, trustworthy and compelling evidence about the positive benefits that AI can deliver.

Megan Harris, Managing Director of SYZYGY North America said, “Consumers want AI to feel human, speak their language, and make their experiences seamless, and better. That’s the emotional response.”

Subsequently, AI should be positioned as a convenience technology designed to make people’s lives easier. Interestingly, there’s evidence of a widespread desire for AI to become more human. The “Uncanny Valley,” first defined by robotics professor Masahiro Mori in 1970, noticed a curious

reaction in people who met humanoid robots. He observed that humanoid robots that look like humans but aren't exactly human—think creepy current androids [like this](https://www.fastcodesign.com/90147151/what-lies-beyond-the-uncanny-valley)—provoke an *uncanny* feeling, generating negativity and even revulsion. <https://www.fastcodesign.com/90147151/what-lies-beyond-the-uncanny-valley>.

In addition to the fact that this negative feeling was undetected in the survey, most people want their AI humanized with a name, personality and even human-like emotions. The ideal personality trait for an AI application is conscientious.

After delving into more emotive topics, some suggested uses were a life coach, and sex robots with programmable personalities to fulfill sexual desires. However, 53% of men and 78% of women would consider it cheating if their partner had sex with a sex robot without telling them.

In marketing, 69% of consumers feel indifferent about their favorite brands using AI to tailor offers, ads, and recommendations, based on personal needs, and 72% are indifferent to AI being used for customer support.

A.I. in Marketing – 8 in 10 want a *“Blade Runner”* Law

SYZYGY Digital Insight Report 2017
How People Feel About Artificial Intelligence: What Marketers Need to Know

Base: General Population Sample – 5000 adults aged 18-45 in DE (2K), UK (2K), and US (2K) – WPP LightSpeed Online Consumer Panel; Fieldwork conducted Q1, 2017

However, the survey research revealed that 79% of Americans believe a new “Blade Runner Rule” is needed to make it illegal for AI applications such as social media bots, chat bots and

virtual assistants to conceal their identity and pose as humans,” reported Market Insider:

<https://dataflog.com/read/public-perception-ai-marketing-brand/3832>

Nine in 10 (89%) Americans surveyed believe that the use of AI in marketing should be regulated with a legally-binding code of conduct and almost three-quarters (71%) think that brands should need their explicit consent before using AI when marketing to them.

Based on how consumers feel, Megan Harris, with SYZYGY recommend a voluntary AI Code of Ethics:

- **Do no harm** – AI technology may not be used to deceive, manipulate or in any other way harm the wellbeing of marketing audiences
- **Build trust** – AI should be used to build rather than erode trust in marketing. This means using AI to improve marketing transparency, honesty and fairness, and to eliminate false, manipulative or deceptive content
- **Do not conceal** – AI systems should not conceal their

identity or pose as humans in interactions with marketing audiences

- **Be helpful** – AI in marketing should be put to the service of marketing audiences by helping people make better purchase decisions based on their genuine needs through the provision of clear, truthful and unbiased information

Megan added, “After all, as marketing professionals, isn’t it our jobs to do the same: to be transparent, honest, build trust, educate, and be helpful? Brands and businesses need to collaborate to determine the safe, and responsible use of AI across marketing that focuses on its value to the consumer.”

Harvard Business Review defined “30 Elements of Value” that meet four kinds of needs – functional, emotional, life changing, and social impact – and that, when optimally combined increase loyalty and revenue growth: <https://hbr.org/2016/09/the-elements-of-value>

When asked, over the next five years, what do you see as the main benefits of AI for you personally? Top answers were: save time, safer things, more useful, save effort, save energy, and make things more enjoyable, including customer support.

When asked, what is your top fear or concern about possible AI threats or risks? Answers were: AI taking jobs, dehumanizing the world, eroding personal privacy, making humans lazy, turning against us, making mistakes, used in crime, taking control, and making humans obsolete.

A majority (89%) of respondents believe AI in marketing should be regulated with a legally-binding code of conduct. At the end of the survey, “This is 2018” was the theme. AI automation advertisers can target and personalize ads based on our individual personalities by interpreting digital traces we leave online.

The augmented age is the future, and technology will increase

our cognitive ability to imagine and create new things. It's the combination of the physical world, robotics, AI and humans.

Futurist and designer Maurice Conti's Tedx's talk, "The incredible inventions of intuitive AI" said, "The shape of things to come will be unlike anything we've ever seen because it's a new partnership between technology, nature, and humanity. That's a future that is well worth looking forward to."

https://www.ted.com/talks/maurice_conti_the_incredible_inventions_of_intuitive_ai

* The SYZYGY digital insight AI survey was conducted in August 2017 using a general population sample of 2000 adults from the WPP Light speed online consumer research.



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