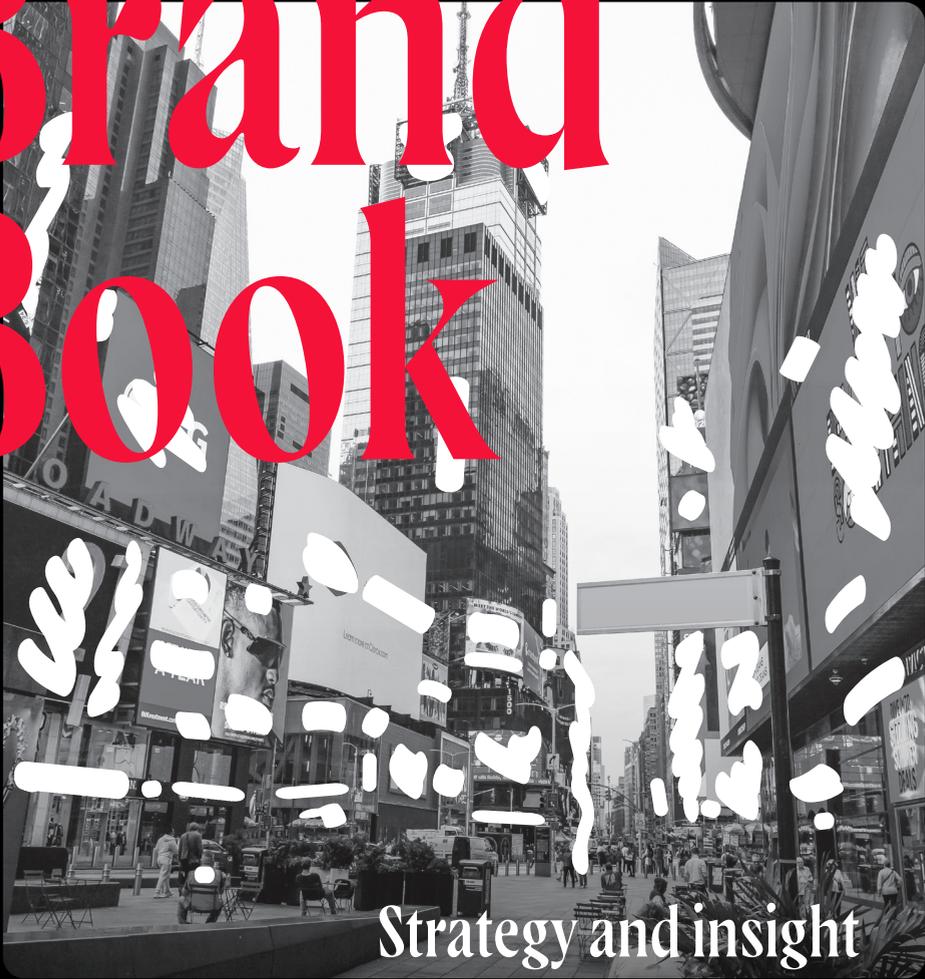


Brand Book



Strategy and insight
to future-proof
your brand in 2025



2025 - The year your brand becomes your super power

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Welcome to our first ever edition of the Create Inc. Brand Book; an insightful piece designed to inspire and support brands and teams over the coming year.



Katie Moran - Director

The year 2024 was full of change, from huge global shifts in the political and economic landscapes through to more niche marketing changes that effected our industry. For me the most memorable industry highlights of the year come in the form of: "The rise of AI", aka the most overused phrase of the year, an impactful campaign for World Down Syndrome Day, some cool activation campaigns and collabs like Greggs/Monzo, unexpected brands becoming epic content creators – we see you Currys, TikTok being deemed a competitor to Google in the world of search, iconic and consistent work from brands like Surreal, Aldi and Dove, and finally fierce competition amongst brands revealing their new identities ... yes, we're all thinking of that one. It's been fun, it's been turbulent, and it's been a lot, but blimey, it's been a year of swift progression.

WHAT A YEAR IT'S BEEN!

Over at Create Inc., we too have ushered in considerable change in 2024, granted not to the scale above, but namely in our very own rebrand. We said goodbye to the beloved Ginger Root Print, positioning ourselves to align with the larger corporate clients we partner with and pitch to. We have a lot of love for "GR" and our history, but to signify our ten years in business, it was time for a glow-up. We remain the same, dedicated and passionate team but we're now laser focussed on becoming brand partners, shaping identities, and creating beautiful b2b campaigns and digital environments.



BRAND

is everywhere

Everything Everywhere

Whether you're walking down the road to the shops or on your commute to work - brand is everywhere around you.

From the billboard towering above your bus stop to the logo on your coffee cup, brand is woven into the fabric of our everyday lives. It's not just the big, bold campaigns; it's the subtle details—the colours, the fonts, the tone of voice—that influence how we see and feel about the world around us.

Every shop front, every ad on your phone, every carefully designed package on the shelf is part of a brand's story, silently competing for your attention. Whether it sparks curiosity, trust, or a craving for your favourite snack, brand shapes our decisions in ways we rarely even notice.

The question is, how does your brand make people feel?



**A Brand is what *they*
say it is. Not what you
say it is.**

- Marty Neumeier



You Have 8 Seconds

The modern consumer's attention span is just 8-seconds. Technically, that's shorter than a goldfish. For brands trying to cut through the noise, not only to capture attention but hold it long enough to make an impact, it's challenging.

In a digital age where mobile device usage is higher than ever before and people are flooded with an overwhelming amount of information on a daily basis, it's no surprise that consumers' attentiveness has dwindled in recent decades.

So, in a world saturated with content and rapid-fire scrolling, how do you stand out, build connections, and thrive?



UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE

Gone are the days of trying to just outdo your competitors. Fighting for attention means competing against every bit of content out there, as well as people's valuable time. This poses a particularly challenging environment for marketers, and brands as a whole. How can you stand out in a sea of endless, fast-paced content and personalised algorithms?

Brands need to reconsider their approach, looking more specifically at where their audiences are, what they're interested in, their buying behaviour, and what truly resonates with them. Right time, right place has never been more applicable.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS REALLY COUNT

With such short attention spans, creating the right hook is more imperative than ever. Despite the average attention span being 8 seconds, in reality most people will have decided whether or not to engage with content further, in nearer 3 seconds. It's therefore crucial that the first few seconds of your content presents the information and tone that you want it to, hooking the audience's attention as soon as possible.

Creating compelling headlines, dynamic visuals and immediate value propositions will all help in capturing attention. Don't forget to consider these elements across every piece of content you put out into the world.

PROVIDE REAL VALUE

Hooking people in is only the start; retaining attention is where real impact is made. To thrive, brands need to create content that delivers real value, offering insights, solutions, or entertainment that genuinely aligns with audience needs. Quality over quantity builds trust and holds attention longer.

CREATE A NARRATIVE

Storytelling is a timeless yet powerful approach to holding attention. A well-crafted narrative not only captivates but also forges an emotional connection, which is proven to make it more memorable. (I'm sure we can all recall a specific advert, video or article that sticks out in our mind because we connected more deeply with it).

continues ↘

A consistent narrative **builds trust and familiarity**, crucial for keeping attention beyond the initial hook.

Making content interactive and/or shareable through emotional resonance or practical utility is also a great way to extend its reach and impact. Not only that, but it is a great way to achieve brand awareness, organically.

CREATE CONTENT 'LOOPS'

A clear call-to-action is a key tactic for keeping engagement alive, guiding audiences toward the next step, whether it's clicking a link, commenting, or exploring more.

By doing this successfully you create content 'loops' that hold attention for longer, taking consumers on a journey that goes full circle and avoids fragmented experiences that can cause frustration and disengagement.

CREATE OMNICHANNEL CONSISTENCY

The average number of touch points for creating a customer is eight, so ensuring the messaging, tone, and experience across a variety of platforms feel cohesive and unified, is imperative.

Leveraging data analytics to understand how audiences interact with different channels will help refine your strategy. Knowing where attention spikes and drops can guide you in crafting content that resonates most effectively across touch points.

GET PERSONAL

Finally, nothing sustains attention like making it personal. Consumers are far more likely to engage when they feel content speaks directly to them. Tailoring messages based on demographics, preferences, and behavioural insights can create a sense of relevance that cuts through the noise.

In an era of distractions, standing out isn't just about being seen, it's about being remembered. By prioritising impactful hooks, cohesive experiences, and meaningful connections, brands can thrive, even in a world where attention is fleeting.



81%

of consumers need to trust a brand before buying*

Standing Out

Have a strong look.
Have a strong promise.
Have a strong value proposition.

Use all the above consistently.

Potter Clarkson's Head of Business Development, Douglas McPherson, shares his experience developing professional services brands to help them stand out in sea of sameness.

Creating a stand out professional services brand comes with three key challenges. Firstly, it's a crowded, multi-tiered market with everything from multinationals to boutiques clamouring for attention. Secondly, most prospective punters can't really tell firms saying roughly the same things apart. And thirdly, legal and financial advice typically isn't the most engaging.

Professional services firms need to approach branding much like consumer products. 'Fit for purpose' is no longer enough and 'doing what we've always done' isn't a viable strategy.

Here's what I've learned about developing brands that stand out from both my time in-house and in agency:

HAVE A STRONG LOOK

Visually strong brands will always stand out more. Trust your creative team and try to eschew your inbuilt conservatism when building your brand to avoid blending in.

Messaging for professional services brands selling complex products can be challenging, but you should always avoid overly technical jargon. Communicate how your audience does to avoid losing people at the first hurdle.

HAVE A STRONG PROMISE

Everything starts with your promise. You need to be able to say quickly, clearly and definitively what you're going to do for the client. And it needs to be what they want you to do for them. At Potter Clarkson we use 'maximising the value of innovation'. It works. People create intellectual property to make an impact, benefit their markets and – of course – make money.

HAVE A STRONG VALUE PROPOSITION

Once you have your promise, you need to show how you'll deliver it. Building on the Potter Clarkson example, we maximise the value of innovation because we offer a blend of deep technical expertise, providing a full service

offering with attorneys and solicitors working as one team, with a commercial approach squarely focused on creating value from day one. Each of these points is supported by the benefits – the "so what?" – spelling out exactly what these things do for clients.

USE ALL THE ABOVE CONSISTENTLY

One of the well worn clichés I use more than I should in the working week is "good marketing is consistency". One you have your brand identity, your promise and your proposition, use them consistently across all channels – in person, online and in writing. If there are any chinks in your delivery, it will weaken your brand.

USE STORIES

Another of my many overused clichés is "you'll do more with two lines from a client that you will with 2 pages of professional sales copy"; if you use testimonials, client examples and case studies, they will bring what you're saying into even sharper focus.

Imagine how much more interest you'll generate if the response you generate is "well if they have done it for them ..." or "these are the kinds of businesses we look up to ..."?

Ensure your visual identity also clearly reflects your business, resonates with your target markets, and **communicates your uniqueness.**



potterclarkson.com





OWN

your onliness



To be irreplaceable,
one must always be
different.

- Coco Chanel

The modern day bombardment of visual stimulation and explosion of AI generated content means celebrating what sets your brand apart is more important than ever.

For most brands, it's too tempting to play it safe, preferring to position themselves comfortably alongside competitors in fear of causing controversy.

However, embracing your 'onliness' doesn't have to mean being a disruptor. It's about identifying what truly makes your offering unique to customers.

So, avoid blending in and find the niche that will make your brand distinctive, before someone else does.

The beauty in visual strategy

The simplicity of sketching enables you to focus on the overall concept and layout, ensuring that the foundation is solid before you add the finer details digitally. Sketching makes it easier to share ideas and collaborate with clients, colleagues, and peers.

make sure everyone involved is aligned from the beginning, alleviating nasty surprises. You don't need to be an artist to sketch out ideas. If you can put pen to paper, you can participate in this creative phase.

A quick sketch can communicate a concept more effectively than a detailed digital draft at an early stage. It invites feedback and discussion, a great communicative tool to

**The goal is not to create a masterpiece,
but to convey possibilities.**



Mission Possible

How Fisher German Turned Podcasts into a Game-Changer for Reaching New Audiences

As a property consultancy firm, reaching our target consumers on their daily commute is something us marketers are used to paying sky high CPA rates for. Think train digital advertising, tube station boards or radio station jingles.

Advertising through these channels felt sporadic, time-sensitive and was predominantly only effective for brand awareness - short, sharp messages with a clear brand identity. As a multi-disciplinary firm, with over 20 services operating across 12 markets, short, sharp messaging with a couple of second attention span feels like mission impossible.



Our podcast series, Fisher German Talks, brings our listeners the most important conversations in property and surveying. It was born in 2021, as a new initiative to get closer to our clients, push out from traditional marketing channels and position ourselves as the friendly subject matter expert they need. Fisher German Talks is now entering its fifth season, achieving over 80,000 listens and attracting great feedback from internal and external audiences alike.

You might think that seeing a professional services logo on your Spotify home page isn't the most natural fit, however this is where I am going to convince you that there is an audience for B2B on podcast platforms; and in fact, it should be on your marketing radar for 2025.

continues ↘

A few tips we have learnt along the way:

SET UP COSTS ARE PRETTY LOW

We employ a specialist podcast agency that help with end-end production and analytics. It's a one-off cost, and the more listens you get, the more the Cost Per Listen (CPL) is driven down.

THE ADDED-VALUE LIES WITH THE GUESTS

We choose internals to host our podcasts and invite fellow experts, peers or clients on as guests. Not only does this balance the argument, but it also helps strengthen relationships outside of our firm.

HOLD OFF ON THE SALES SPIEL

Remember people are voluntarily choosing to go and consume your content, so make it informative and give them something to learn. Reward for listening = knowledge. No one would choose to go and spend their time listening to a sales pitch!

EVERY DAY IS A SCHOOL DAY

Yes, the podcast charts are dominated with reality and entertainment podcasts, but news and current affairs podcasts are set to overtake them as the most popular genre. Business and tech are also gaining traction as listeners look to become more commercially-aware, acquire knowledge all whilst reducing screen time.



So what's next for us?

We now have significant internal buy-in for future episodes and content suggestions, which is great. We will experiment further with mini-series focused on certain geographical areas of BD focus for us. Podcasts are only getting bigger with expected UK listeners increasing from 8.9 million in 2017 to 28.1 million in 2026*.

Podcasts are no longer just a platform for entertainment, they're a powerful tool for building trust, showcasing expertise, and engaging audiences in a meaningful way.

As we head into 2025, the opportunity for B2B marketers to leverage this growing medium is undeniable. So, if you haven't pressed play on podcasting yet, now might be the perfect time to tune in.

Laura Taylor, Senior Marketing Manager at Fisher German.
fishergerman.co.uk

Print Isn't Dead

In a world overwhelmed by digital noise, print offers something powerful: a pause.

While inboxes overflow and ads vanish in seconds, a beautifully designed brochure, or piece of direct mail demands attention. It's tangible, memorable, feels a little luxurious and has qualities that digital often can't replicate. For B2B firms, print signals authority and confidence, leaving prospects with something they can hold, share, and revisit. For B2C brands, it creates emotional connections, turning marketing materials into meaningful brand experiences.

Print also bridges the gap between physical and digital. With innovations like QR codes, NFC technology, and augmented reality, print doesn't sit still, it drives action. A premium catalogue can lead customers to interactive online experiences, seamlessly guiding them across channels. Far from outdated, print integrates into modern strategies as a starting point for deeper engagement.

At its core, print is about storytelling and connection. It's not just an ad; it's an experience. In a cluttered, digital-first landscape, print stands out, delivering trust, retention, and impact. It reminds us of the value of permanence and the unmatched power of something thoughtfully crafted.

Strategic marketing leaders, take note: print isn't a relic; it's the competitive edge you didn't know you needed.



**It's the competitive edge
you didn't know you needed.**



LOOK
to the future

Continuous advancements in technology are constantly creating new ways and platforms to connect with people.

As a result, digital marketing moves at a rapid rate and staying up-to-date is a full-time job.

Yet, keeping up with these opportunities is essential and early adopters often gain a competitive edge.

With so many new opportunities, algorithm changes, and the rise in AI technologies, it's hard to know where to focus your marketing efforts. No matter your business or size of budget, however, it's important to align your strategy to your business objectives and always provide value to your customers.

To help you navigate the year ahead, we've gathered some of the key trends and updates to look out for.

**Your brand
is the single most
important investment
you can make in
your business.**

- Steve Forbes

Be More B2C



**B2C equals emotion and
B2B equals formality.**

Or does it?

The motivations and mindset of the two audiences might differ, but it always comes down to a person making a decision.

Brands are increasingly blending traditional B2B and B2C strategies, and the results speak for themselves.

In this article we take a look at the key psychological and motivational differences between B2B and B2C audiences, as well as how harnessing the similarities could drive greater success in 2025.

THE KEY DIFFERENCES

Business buyers are typically more risk averse, choosing to avoid making the wrong choice in fear of losing their reputation, or worse, their job. Yet consumers, who are spending their own money tend to be more impulsive. After all, a poor purchase might end in regret, but it won't publicly damage professional pride.

It's because of this difference in psychology and situation, that marketing messaging varies so much.

But why is it that we consider B2B so void of emotion? After all, business decisions are still made by humans. The emotions might be different, but there's emotion all the same.

As it stands, B2B and B2C marketing models typically also target very different marketing channels.

For B2C, media such as TV, radio, OOH, Instagram and TikTok are common choices. For B2B however, marketing channels tend to include LinkedIn, trade shows, email and SEO. As technology advances and the way that people engage with digital media changes almost daily, it makes sense to regularly review how and where audiences roam.

GETTING OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

We're seeing more and more B2B brands branch out to non-typical channels and techniques such as podcasts, emotionally driven messaging, and YouTube.

Even influencer marketing, for example, is becoming more popular with B2B brands following the success in the B2C world, and I

think it's fair to say that LinkedIn has shifted in recent years to show more personal, emotionally driven content than it had done previously.

Splurging your marketing budget on late night TikTok adverts probably won't ever be the right decision for your B2B brand. However, it's important to try channels and techniques you might not typically believe to be fruitful.

A/B test different channels, techniques, messaging, visuals, and timings to find out what really works for your business.

THE FUTURE OF B2B

In an always-on digital world, brands have the opportunity to engage with audiences 24/7. By blending emotional and rational messaging and testing unconventional channels, B2B marketers can create campaigns that resonate across both work and personal contexts.

Ultimately, effective marketing isn't about rigidly sticking to "B2B" or "B2C" models. It's about finding out what works for your business and understanding the human emotions behind every decision, because no matter the context, people buy from people.

A Guide to AI & Marketing Superins

If there's one thing we know about marketing, it's that the rules are constantly changing and in 2025, AI is set to rewrite them all over again.

From tools that supercharge creativity to algorithms that predict consumer behaviour better than ever, artificial intelligence isn't just a buzzword anymore; it's the driving force behind the most innovative marketing strategies.

But AI isn't just about automation or efficiency. It's about unlocking smarter ways to connect with audiences, crafting campaigns that feel deeply personal, and making data-driven decisions with a creative edge. It's where technology meets storytelling, and for marketers, that's a game-changer.

As we dive into 2025, it's clear that those who embrace AI - not just as a tool, but as a co-creator will lead the way.



Top 5 Trends for 2025

SEO gets smarter with AI and GEO targeting

01

Search engines are shifting toward intent-based algorithms, prioritising relevance and localisation. Geo-targeted SEO strategies are crucial for connecting with nearby customers, especially for direct-to-consumer brands. Meanwhile, AI tools like ChatGPT and Jasper are helping marketers generate optimised, hyper-targeted content in minutes. For B2B, it's all about intent data—understanding what decision-makers are searching for and delivering tailored solutions directly to them.

Pro tip: Use tools like Semrush's Keyword Magic Tool, ChatGPT, or Ahrefs to identify high-traffic, low-competition keywords.

Focus on long-tail keywords and questions users ask related to your niche.

Video marketing: short, snappy and everywhere

02

Video content continues to dominate, but attention spans are shorter than ever. For D2C and B2C audiences, platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels are leading the charge with short, punchy videos that grab attention instantly. B2B brands aren't left behind, case study videos, product demos, and webinar clips are proving their worth on LinkedIn and YouTube.

Pro tip: Craft short, authentic stories that resonate with your audience's emotions. Whether it's humour, inspiration, or relatability, create videos that make viewers feel something. Use real-life moments, behind-the-scenes clips, or customer success stories to connect on a personal level.

Sustainability and social responsibility take centre stage

03

Consumers increasingly want to align with brands that share their values. Transparency around sustainability, ethical sourcing, and social responsibility is no longer optional... it's expected. Marketing messages should reflect authentic commitments to these causes, resonating with most audiences.

Share stories of your sustainability efforts or partnerships with charitable organisations. For B2B firms, highlight how your services or products contribute to sustainable goals.

Pro tip: Feature your employees, customers, or communities directly impacted by your initiatives (e.g. footage from tree-planting events or interviews with beneficiaries).

The shift toward phygital experiences

04

The line between physical and digital experiences is blurring. Pop-up shops, AR activations, and QR code-enabled campaigns are creating immersive moments that bridge the gap between online and offline interactions. For B2C and D2C, it's a way to stand out in a competitive space, while B2B marketers are using hybrid events to engage with audiences.

Pro tip: Combine physical and digital experiences into a seamless ecosystem that engages customers at every touch point. Use AR-powered retail displays, gamified in-person events, and hybrid activations to blend convenience with memorable interactivity.

Strengthening subcultures and building communities

05

Despite living in the most hyper-connected time in history, loneliness is on the rise. This is especially high for young consumers, with 40% of Gen Z considering loneliness a personal risk over the next five years, globally.*

Yet again, connection is a hot topic here, and is evidenced in the rise of online communities and subcultures. Platforms such as Reddit, Discord and Strava have seen considerable growth in users over the past few years.

People are actively seeking places where they can share common interests with others, build connections, and even relationships. Consider these when mapping out user personas.

Pro tip: Create opportunities for authentic two-way conversations, foster a sense of belonging, and create an engaging community where individuals feel seen.



The Future of SEO in 2025



How AI and TikTok Are Redefining the Game



You've spent years mastering SEO, perfecting your keyword strategies, and chasing those elusive #1 spots on Google. But just when you think you've cracked the code, along comes AI to flip the table. Enter ChatGPT, DALL-E, and other disruptors who are changing the way we search, learn, and create content.

Gone are the days of simple keyword stuffing and backlink chases. The way we interact with search engines is evolving at breakneck speed. Want to know how to make a Baked Alaska after watching The Great British Bake Off? Sure, you could Google it. But wouldn't it be more satisfying to see it made in a quick, visually engaging video?

Cue TikTok. What was once the home of dance challenges and "day in the life" vlogs is now a powerhouse for quick, reliable, and highly visual information. By 2024, 40% of Americans were using TikTok as a search tool, with 1 in 10 Gen Z users preferring it over Google. This shift shows a growing desire for visual, interactive content tailored to specific interests, like tutorials and reviews. SEO is no longer just about words – it's about compelling visuals and quick access.

SEO is evolving faster than ever, with AI and visual platforms like TikTok leading the way.

To stay ahead in 2025, it's time to embrace these changes and integrate them into your digital strategy – after all, **the future of SEO is visual, conversational and powered by AI.**

91%

of businesses are already using video as a marketing tool*

The conceit of this book is to 'future-proof brands' however, as the environments we operate in are ever changing, can we ever really future-proof a brand?



Alex Crabtree - Creative Director

Well, yes and no.

A consistent and well leveraged brand with strong vision, values and purpose will endure by aligning consumer needs with their operation. Yet, the brand's appearance must bend and flex as trends and demands dictate.

The mass adoption of AI and analytics are prime examples of how brands must be both rigid and flexible. Both technologies present brands with faster generation and feedback meaning we can test communications faster with consumers, offering infinite opportunity for new visual and verbal triggers to engage with our brand to grow awareness and equity. However, every test must consistently look, sound and feel like the central brand consumers love, otherwise our brand equity is lost and awareness diminishes.

Whilst speed is good, accumulatively this increased output saturates our channels making it even more difficult to gain traction so, does our desire for the very metrics that validate brand spend ultimately undermine itself?

Well, yes and no. (Ha!)

Tracking isn't going anywhere and undoubtedly provides a fairly accurate idea of how well our brands perform - and the measurement techniques are only getting more sophisticated. Yet, for every signal we send and response we collect, there's a human; feeling.

And this is where a strong core brand is essential. It provides a platform for consistent communication, regardless of frequency or origin. A strong core can unite infinite creative communication ideas - no matter how disparate - back to the central feeling consumers want.

No matter how much technology advances, we remain human and, when we look at the emerging trends and insights chronicled in this book, they demonstrate that as humans, we are becoming even more discerning about when to invite technology to help and when we will simply want to rely on our instincts.

As we move into 2025, the brands that will succeed will understand when to use data and technology and when to leverage human intuition. This seems to be the key skill for us as communication experts heading into 2025.

So ask GPT but also remember to ask your GUT.

UNDERSTAND WHEN TO USE DATA AND TECHNOLOGY AND WHEN TO LEVERAGE HUMAN INTUITION



Want to stay ahead of the competition in 2025?



