JÖNKÖPING UNIVERSITY
*School of Engineering*

# The Role of AI Tools in Creative and Digital Professional Practice

A qualitative study of AI tool use among creative and digital professionals

**Main Subject area:** *Informatics*
**Author:** *Belmin Music, David Moshe*
**Supervisor:** *Ulf Linnman*
**JÖNKÖPING:** 2026 Juni

This final thesis has been carried out at the School of Engineering at Jönköping University within [see main field on previous page]. The authors are responsible for the presented opinions, conclusions and results.

Examiner: Neziha Akalin

Supervisor: Ulf Linnmann

Scope: 15 hp (first-cycle education)

Date: 2026-06-04

## Abstract

The way graphic designers and web developers approach their work has changed as a result of the quick integration of artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities into creative and digital professional practice. While the majority of current research has been on AI's technical capabilities and efficiency potential, professionals' real experiences with and integration of these technologies in day to day practice have received less attention. This study looks into how AI technologies are utilized in workflows for web development and graphic design, how professionals view their influence on efficiency and creativity, and how professionals consider how AI might change jobs and responsibilities in the future.

Ten semi structured interviews with working professionals in Sweden, representing positions such as graphic designers, UX/UI designers, web developers, copywriters, and creative directors, were used to gather data for this qualitative study. Five recurrent themes were found through thematic analysis: AI as a workflow tool, impact on creativity, efficiency and time savings, ethical concerns and accountability, and changing professional roles.

The results demonstrate how deeply ingrained AI is in professional processes, but how it is integrated varies greatly by role, tool type, and organizational setting. AI has a dual effect on creativity, according to experts, while it speeds up ideation and cuts down on time spent on technical chores, it also runs the risk of producing generic outputs and reducing the depth of creative thinking. Efficiency improvements were regularly reported, especially in picture editing, transcription, and research synthesis, but these improvements were said to be dependent on human assessment. In the lack of official organizational norms, ethical issues pertaining to authorship, confidentiality, and bias were becoming more prevalent in professional practice and were frequently handled through informal personal frameworks. Participants expected their roles to continue changing, with interpersonal skills, human judgment, and strategic thinking emerging as long lasting sources of professional worth.

The study offers empirical, practice based insights into how AI works as a sociotechnical system in creative digital work, redefining rather than decreasing the significance of human creativity and judgment.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, graphic design, web development, creative workflows, professional roles, human-computer interaction, thematic analysis, qualitative research.

**Abstract** ..... **2**
**1 Introduction** ..... **3**
1.1 Problem statement ..... 3
1.2 Purpose and research questions ..... 4
1.3 Scope and limitations ..... 5
1.4 Disposition ..... 6
**2 Theoretical framework** ..... **8**
2.1 Human Computer Interaction and Generative AI ..... 8
2.2 User Centered Design and AI Supported Workflows ..... 8
2.3 Technology Adoption and Professional Use ..... 9
2.4 Efficiency and Workflow Transformation ..... 9
2.5 Ethical Perspectives in AI-Assisted Creative Work ..... 10
2.6 Summary of the Theoretical Framework ..... 10
**3 Method and implementation** ..... **11**
3.1 Research Approach and Design ..... 11
3.2 Data collection ..... 12
3.3 Data analysis ..... 14
3.4 Validity and reliability ..... 15
3.5 Considerations ..... 15
**4 Results** ..... **16**
4.1 Presentation of Collected Data ..... 16
Theme 1: AI as a Workflow Tool ..... 17
Theme 2: Impact on Creativity ..... 18
Theme 3: Efficiency and Time Savings ..... 19
Theme 4: Ethical Concerns and Accountability ..... 20
Theme 5: Shifting Professional Roles ..... 21
RQ2: How do professionals perceive the impact of AI tools on creativity and efficiency? ..... 23
RQ3: How do professionals reflect on how AI may shape future roles and responsibilities within digital media work? ..... 24
**5 Discussion** ..... **25**
5.1 Result discussion ..... 25
5.2 Method discussion ..... 28
**6 Conclusions and further research** ..... **31**
6.1 Conclusions ..... 31
6.2 Further research ..... 32
**7 References** ..... **34**
**8 Appendixes** ..... **35**
Appendix 1: Interview Guide ..... 35

Warm-up questions.....35
AI tool usage..... 35
Creativity and efficiency..... 35
Professional role and identity.....35
User-centred perspective..... 36
Ethics and responsibility..... 36
Future perspectives.....36

# 1 Introduction

The digital creative industries, especially web development and graphic design, have quickly incorporated artificial intelligence (AI). Across all phases of creative production, AI-supported tools like code-support systems, design assistants, and picture generators are becoming more and more common. According to recent study, AI can support jobs like content creation, layout development, and repetitive labor automation, which can affect the speed and structure of creative workflows (Li et al., 2024; Mohamed & Adiloğlu, 2025).

At the same time, discussions concerning the implications for professional responsibilities and creative work have been sparked by the increasing use of AI tools. AI may increase productivity and efficiency (Mohamed & Adiloğlu, 2025), but it can also cause issues with responsibility, transparency, authorship, originality, and prejudice (Dedijer et al., 2025). AI has the potential to transform design work in the workplace by altering the skills that are valued and the way that designers relate to technology (Cai & Jung, 2024).

These advancements are pertinent from an informatics standpoint since they deal with how people use and engage with digital technologies in work environments. One way to conceptualize generative AI is as a socio-technical system that permits specific behaviors while simultaneously posing risks, limitations, and moral dilemmas (Humble & Cajander, 2025; Dedijer et al., 2025). Even though AI is being used in practice extremely quickly, more empirical research is still needed to understand how professionals use these technologies on a daily basis.

Thus, this study investigates how AI technologies are used by web developers and graphic designers as well as how they perceive their impact on professional responsibilities, efficiency, and creative processes.

## 1.1 Problem statement

The quick advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities is increasingly influencing visual design and web development. The production and execution of creative work is changing as a result of the incorporation of technologies like generative design tools, code helpers, and picture generators into professional

workflows (Li et al., 2024; Mohamed & Adiloğlu, 2025). Although these tools open up new possibilities for productivity and automation, they also pose questions about creativity, originality, and the designer's role in the creative process (Cai & Jung, 2024).

The increasing application of AI in the creative industries raises ethical and professional issues in addition to practical ones. Issues like authorship, accountability, and bias in AI-generated material have grown in significance as AI systems are trained on massive datasets that may have embedded biases (Dedijer et al., 2025). The responsible integration of AI into professional design methods is called into doubt by these advancements.

Even while AI technologies are becoming more prevalent in the business, little is known about how web developers and graphic designers utilize and interact with these tools on a regular basis. The impact of AI tools on creative processes, professional roles, and user centered design methods has received less attention than their technical capabilities and efficiency improvements (Mohamed & Adiloğlu, 2025). (Humble & Cajander, 2025).

More precisely, little research has been done on how professionals view AI's effects on their creativity, work habits, and decision making in practical contexts. To fully comprehend the benefits and difficulties that AI brings to creative digital work, it is critical to close this gap. In order to investigate how AI technologies are viewed, utilized, and incorporated into professional practice, this study focuses on the experiences of graphic designers and web developers.

## 1.2 Purpose and research questions

Based on the problem statement, it is clear that the use of AI tools in web development and graphic design is growing, but there isn't much empirical study on how practitioners use these tools on a daily basis. Furthermore, it is clear that little research has been done on the perceived effects of AI on productivity, creativity, and professional identity. Therefore, by producing comprehensive, practice based insights on how creative professionals utilize and perceive AI products, this study seeks to close this gap. Thus, the goal of this research is to look into how AI technologies are

used in graphic design and web development, as well as how experts view their effects on efficiency, creative processes, and professional obligations.

There are two reasons why this goal is important. In the first place, it adds empirical knowledge to a sector where research is lagging behind adoption. Second, it has real world ramifications for organizational policy around ethical AI use, professional growth, and design education. Three research questions have been established in order to achieve the goal. How AI is incorporated into current professional processes is the first research topic in the study:

RQ1: How are AI tools currently used in graphic design and web development workflows?

Evaluating any observed consequences requires an understanding of usage patterns. Thus, the second research question of the study focuses on how professionals perceive AI in connection to two fundamental aspects of their work:

RQ2: How do professionals perceive the impact of AI tools on creativity and efficiency?

Lastly, the study's third research topic tackles future focused reflections because AI is changing not just jobs but entire professional roles:

RQ3: How do professionals reflect on how AI may shape future roles and responsibilities within digital media work?

## 1.3 Scope and limitations

Professionals in web development and graphic design participated in semi-structured interviews for this qualitative study. Rather than producing statistically generalizable results, the study seeks to produce in-depth insights into experiences and perspectives. Professionals' descriptions and interpretations of AI tools in daily practice are the main focus.

The study does not assess AI tools from the standpoint of performance testing or technical engineering. Furthermore, a detailed comparison of certain AI systems is not its goal. Rather, the study concentrates on the function of AI tools in professional practice and the relationship between their use and professional responsibilities, creativity, efficiency, and user-centered work.

Due to the study's geographic restriction to professionals in Sweden, its conclusions could not apply to other countries and instead reflect organizational cultures, industrial conditions, and legal frameworks unique to Sweden. To keep the focus on AI adoption within organizational work environments, freelancing or self employed designers and developers were not included in the participant sample, which is made up only of employed professionals. Although the sample includes a variety of roles and levels of expertise, it cannot be said to be representative of all professional roles in the industry. The method discussion in Chapter 5 goes into further detail about these delimitations.

Furthermore, the third research question concerns how professionals reflect on future role changes, which is inherently speculative in nature. Unlike RQ1 and RQ2, which are grounded in descriptions of current practice, RQ3 is based on practitioner predictions and anticipations. These reflections are valuable as professional perspectives but should be interpreted with caution, as they may reflect anxieties or aspirations rather than likely outcomes.

Additionally, the concept of creativity in this study is defined based on participants' own descriptions rather than an established theoretical definition. While this grounds the concept in professional practice, it creates a methodological limitation — the impact of AI on creativity is assessed using a definition shaped by the very participants being studied. Anchoring the concept in a theoretical definition would have provided more stable analytical footing.

## 1.4 Disposition

There are six major chapters in this thesis. Chapter 1 presents the study's background, problem description, purpose, research questions, scope, and disposition. In addition to outlining relevant theories and concepts related to technology adoption,

user-centered design, and human-computer interaction, Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework.

Chapter 3 covers the research approach, data collection, data analysis, and validity and reliability factors in addition to the study technique. Chapter 4 presents the results of the empirical inquiry. Chapter 5 discusses methodological issues and how the findings relate to the theoretical framework and previous studies. The study's findings are summarized in Chapter 6 along with suggestions for further research.

# 2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical basis of the research are presented in this chapter. The framework is used to: (1) direct the design of the interviews; and (2) organize the analysis of the empirical results. In accordance with the comments obtained, the chapter not only outlines pertinent viewpoints but also makes clear how each will be used analytically and what constraints each theory has with regard to the goal of the study.

## 2.1 Human Computer Interaction and Generative AI

Research on human-computer interaction, or HCI, offers valuable insights into how professionals use AI tools in their daily job. Because generative AI allows for dynamic, context-aware interaction and can function as a collaborative partner rather than a static instrument, Humble and Cajander (2025) characterize it as a disruptive shift in HCI. Because it enables consideration of the advantages and limitations of using AI in practice, their affordances and constraints lens is especially pertinent to this thesis.

**How analysis will make use of it:**
This viewpoint will be used to examine how participants characterize constraints (such as uncertainty, control difficulties, trust, or accountability) and how they characterize AI technologies as facilitating particular actions (such as faster ideation or automation) (Humble & Cajander, 2025).

**Limitation:**
Although affordances and limitations aid in the interpretation of interaction and use, they are not sufficient to explain more general ethical or labor market implications. As a result, adoption and ethical viewpoints complement it.

## 2.2 User Centered Design and AI Supported Workflows

Designing solutions that satisfy user demands and promote usability is the focus of user-centered design, or UCD. Through automation, quick prototyping, and personalization, AI tools are having a rising impact on design and development workflows (Li et al., 2024). However, if AI results are accepted without critical assessment, automation may also cause decision-making to diverge from reflective design approaches.

**How analysis will make use of it:**

In order to determine whether AI facilitates user-centered iteration or poses hazards like less reflection or over-reliance, UCD will be utilized to investigate how experts characterize preserving (or finding it difficult to retain) user attention when utilizing AI technologies (Li et al., 2024).

**Limitation:**

Professional identity issues are not adequately explained by UCD, which primarily focuses on end user results. As a result, role and ethics are added to it.

### 2.3 Technology Adoption and Professional Use

Perspectives on technology adoption aid in the explanation of why experts decide to use AI tools in their work. AI is said to be altering the function of graphic designers in the labor market by reorienting focus toward higher-order jobs including creative direction, user comprehension, and strategic thinking (Cai & Jung, 2024). This implies that adoption involves changing standards for professional competence in addition to usefulness.

**How it will be used in analysis:**

This viewpoint will be used to examine how participants explain their reasons for embracing or rejecting AI tools, including perceived advantages (like speed and support) and worries (such deskilling, dependence, and role shifts) (Cai & Jung, 2024).

**Limitation:**

Although adoption viewpoints may underrepresent moral dilemmas or more profound identity conflicts, they can explain acceptance and use. Ethics is therefore included as a distinct viewpoint.

### 2.4 Efficiency and Workflow Transformation

In creative work involving AI, efficiency and process change are key concerns. When AI-assisted features are applied to particular Adobe activities, Mohamed and Adiloğlu

(2025) show significant time and process reductions. This offers factual evidence that AI can alter the time and number of steps needed to complete creative work.

**How it will be used in analysis:**
This viewpoint will help analyze how participants characterize AI-driven efficiency in their day-to-day work (such as time savings and faster iterations) and how they strike a balance between efficiency and quality considerations and creative control (Mohamed & Adiloğlu, 2025).

**Limitation:**
Efficiency findings don't always explain how professionals feel about changing roles or if creativity increases or decreases. As a result, this viewpoint is integrated with ethics, adoption, and HCI.

### 2.5 Ethical Perspectives in AI-Assisted Creative Work

When using AI for creative production, ethics are very important. According to Dedijer et al. (2025), algorithmic bias, authorship, intellectual property, privacy, transparency, and the possibility of homogenization are some of the major ethical issues with AI-enhanced graphic design. Both professional practice and the responsible use of AI-generated content by designers are impacted by these challenges.

**How it will be used in analysis:**
How participants evaluate accountability, originality, ownership, bias, and trust when utilizing AI technologies, as well as how these issues affect their professional activity, will be interpreted using ethical views (Dedijer et al., 2025).

**Limitation:**
A common topic in ethical literature is what ought to be done (normative). Ethics will not be utilized to evaluate specific study participants, but rather as an interpretive lens to examine professional experiences and perspectives.

### 2.6 Summary of the Theoretical Framework

These theoretical perspectives form an integrated framework for understanding how AI tools influence both real-world work processes and broader professional

considerations. While human–computer interaction (HCI) focuses on the interaction between users and systems, user-centered design emphasizes human needs, and technology adoption highlights the motivations behind usage. These perspectives are further complemented by efficiency and ethical viewpoints, which address the implications and consequences of AI integration in professional practice.

The framework captures multiple dimensions of artificial intelligence in creative digital work. From an HCI perspective, AI influences interaction and practical application in daily workflows through the affordances and constraints lens (Humble & Cajander, 2025). User-centered design contributes to understanding how a focus on end users can be maintained or challenged when AI tools are integrated into design and development processes (Li et al., 2024). Perspectives on technology adoption and professional role transformation explain why professionals choose to use AI tools and how these tools may reshape roles, responsibilities, and required competencies (Cai & Jung, 2024). In addition, efficiency research provides empirical support for analyzing productivity gains and workflow transformations associated with AI assisted tasks (Mohamed & Adiloğlu, 2025). Finally, ethical perspectives help interpret concerns related to accountability, ownership, bias, and transparency in AI supported creative work (Dedijer et al., 2025).

Together, these perspectives provide the conceptual foundation for both the design of the interview guide and the analysis of the empirical findings in this study.

# 3 Method and implementation

The methodology used to examine how AI technologies are used in graphic design and web development, as well as how professionals view their impact on creativity, efficiency, and professional obligations, is described and motivated in this chapter. Along with an explanation of how validity and reliability were managed and pertinent ethical and societal considerations, the research design, data collection, and data analysis processes are given.

## 3.1 Research Approach and Design

The study was carried out with an exploratory design and a qualitative research methodology. When the goal is not to measure variables statistically but rather to gain a deeper understanding of experiences, perceptions, and meanings, qualitative research is acceptable (Creswell, 2014). This is in line with the study's objective, which is to ascertain how professionals use AI tools in their daily job and how they perceive the advantages and disadvantages of the technologies. Since the goal of the study is to understand how and why professionals connect to AI technologies as they do, rather than to measure or test variables across a population, a quantitative approach was not adopted. Since there was no intervention or controlled conditions, an experimental design was also inapplicable.

The best way to characterize the study is as an exploratory investigation based on interviews. This design makes it easier to collect professional experiences, reflections, and context dependent practices in order to understand how AI affects creative processes and professional role evolution. The period of data gathering in 2026 was April through May.

### 3.2 Data collection

Data was gathered through semi structured interviews with web developers and graphic designers who actively used AI tools in their work. Semi structured interviews were chosen because they provide a balance between structure and flexibility, allowing participants to elaborate and share perspectives based on their own professional experiences, while also enabling the researchers to address predetermined themes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). This makes them preferable over fully structured surveys, which would not allow for the kind of contextual and experiential depth required to answer the research questions, or unstructured conversations, which would make systematic cross participant comparison more difficult.

Participants had to fulfill two requirements in order to be considered for the study: they had to be engaged in the web development or graphic design industry, and they could not be independent contractors (freelancers). This guaranteed that every

participant had prior experience working in organizational settings where AI tools are incorporated into work processes. Emails were sent directly to businesses in the sector throughout Sweden in order to recruit participants. Ten participants in all, representing a variety of positions such as creative directors, graphic designers, UX designers, web developers, copywriters, and agency founders, were interviewed.

An interview guide was developed based on the research questions and the theoretical framework (HCI, user centered design, technology adoption, efficiency, and ethics). The interviews addressed the following subjects:

- How AI tools are integrated into daily workflows
- Perceived effects on creativity and efficiency
- Reflections on professional roles and competence requirements
- Reflections on maintaining user centered approach when using AI tools
- Perceived challenges, ethical concerns and expectations for future development

The interviews were conducted digitally and physically. Microsoft Teams was used to conduct most of the digital interviews, which lasted between 25 and 95 minutes. In order to guarantee accurate depiction of participants' remarks and to enable systematic analysis, interviews were audio recorded with informed consent from each participant and then verbatim transcribed (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Both the transcripts and the results reporting maintained the anonymity of all participants.

A variety of professional backgrounds and levels of experience were represented among the ten participants. Interviewees included UX and UI designers working at digital consultancies on projects involving financial applications, government services, and product development; a web designer working with smaller companies on website design and development; a copywriter working at an advertising agency on campaign concepts and brand communication; two professionals from a digital marketing agency, one in a founding and strategic role overseeing performance marketing and the other in a creative director role responsible for photography and

content production; a graphic designer and communicator working in the retail industry; and two more designers with backgrounds in graphic design, web development, and user experience. The data included both seasoned professionals and individuals in the early stages of their professions, with experience levels ranging from roughly three years to more than twenty five years.

### 3.3 Data analysis

Thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), was used to examine the interview data. The choice of thematic analysis was used because it is an effective method for finding patterns in qualitative data and producing insights into how people perceive and explain a phenomenon.

The analysis process involved both writers. After reading every transcript on their own to become acquainted with the data, each researcher independently coded significant passages pertaining to the research questions. Following a comparison and discussion of the two sets of codes, any differences were settled by consensus. By lowering the possibility of individual bias, this method improved the analysis's credibility (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The analysis was carried out iteratively using the following steps:

1. Reading transcripts several times to have a general understanding of the facts
2. Initial coding: independently locating and classifying significant passages pertaining to the study questions.
3. Comparing and discussing codes: Both writers discussed and compared their codes in order to settle differences.
4. Theme development: is the process of organizing codes into more general themes that reflect recurrent issues in interviews.
5. Reviewing themes: ensuring coherence and adequate support by comparing themes to the data.
6. Naming and defining themes: guaranteeing precise definitions and honing themes.
7. Reporting: the methodical presentation of themes related to the theoretical framework.

In order to analyze how professionals characterize AI products in terms of practical affordances and restrictions, efficiency impacts, user centered concerns, adoption motives, and ethical issues, the themes were interpreted in reference to the theoretical framework.

### 3.4 Validity and reliability

Validity and dependability were considered throughout the entire study process. Creswell (2014) defines validity as if the study examines what it is intended to examine. The study's validity was reinforced by keeping the goal, research questions, theoretical framework, and chosen methodology consistent. The purpose of the interview guide was to make sure that every research question was covered by pertinent interview prompts and follow-up questions.

In qualitative research, reliability is often emphasized in terms of trustworthiness and credibility. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), transparency and regular recording of the research process can improve trustworthiness. By having both authors separately code the data and then compare and debate their codes, the study's credibility was further enhanced and the possibility of individual interpretation bias was decreased. An audit trail, which enhances transparency and allows others to assess the methods used to arrive at interpretations and conclusions, was produced in part by the interview guide, interview procedures, and thorough explanation of the coding and theme development processes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### 3.5 Considerations

This study took into account a number of factors. From an ethical perspective, participants were informed about the goals of the study, their right to stop participating at any time, and how their data would be used. Voluntary involvement was predicated on informed consent. Participant identifying information was removed from transcripts and the completed thesis.

The study acknowledges that AI tools may affect professional roles, work practices, and competency needs in the digital media industry from a societal and professional perspective. Given that AI-related activity also raises ethical concerns, the study supports a human-centered perspective by viewing AI tools as systems that require critical reflection, transparency, and human oversight in professional practice.

# 4 Results

The results of ten semi structured interviews with experts in web development and graphic design are presented in this chapter. The chapter is divided into two parts: a presentation of the gathered data arranged by theme, and an analysis of the data in connection with the research objectives and theoretical framework.

Given that the idea of creativity arises frequently throughout the data, it is helpful to note how it is understood in this study before presenting the themes. Here, creativity is defined as the ability to generate original ideas, explore various design directions, exercise aesthetic and contextual judgment, and produce work with emotional or communicative resonance, according to the participants' own descriptions. This is a working understanding based on how experts in this survey discussed their own practice rather than a rigid theoretical definition.

## 4.1 Presentation of Collected Data

Five topics emerged from the examination of the interview data: (1) AI as a workflow tool; (2) impact on creativity; (3) efficiency and time savings; (4) ethical concerns and accountability; and (5) evolving professional roles. These themes represent the essential aspects of the study questions and capture the most recurrent patterns in the interviews. The five themes identified collectively address the three research questions, which are analyzed and discussed in relation to the theoretical framework in Chapter 5

**Theme 1: AI as a Workflow Tool**

Although the particular tools and methods of using them differed based on role and project context, all participants described AI tools as an integrated part of their everyday professional processes. It is worth noting that participants used a wide variety of tools, including text-based AI assistants such as ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini; design and prototyping tools such as Figma Make and Google Stitch; image generators such as Midjourney; and AI-powered features built into existing software such as Photoshop and DaVinci Resolve. Where relevant, distinctions between these tool types are noted, as different tools were associated with different uses and concerns.

A number of participants explained a methodical approach to using AI, starting with quick optimization before interacting with more extensive AI systems. "We always start with Prompt Cowboy regardless of what we want to do," a creative director clarified. "It enhances our cues, which we then copy into Gemini or ChatGPT for improved outcomes." Participants noted preferences for specific tools depending on the caliber and critical tone of their responses, and multiple AI platforms were frequently utilized concurrently to compare outputs.

Participants reported considerable use of AI powered features in current creative software, in addition to text based AI tools. AI driven background removal in Photoshop, automatic transcription and beat identification in DaVinci Resolve, and AI assisted music editing are examples of tools that have become commonplace in production workflows. According to other participants, their companies are actively creating specialized AI solutions, like bots that are trained to create and assess advertising content on their own.

A distinct but equally integrated method was described by other participants, who mostly used AI in the research and discovery stages of design projects. One UX designer clarified: "I use Claude, ChatGPT, and Notebook LM mostly for research. When I need to gather a lot of data quickly and structure it, I find these tools very helpful." When beginning with an empty canvas, tools for quick wireframe creation were also recognized as helpful.

Participants also mentioned that using AI tools was not always feasible or suitable. "In my most recent project at a government agency, I had to find ways to use AI safely, or not use it at all in certain situations," one person said, describing project contexts where stringent restrictions applied due to confidentiality requirements when working with government agencies or security-sensitive systems.

A web designer described using AI primarily as an assistant and sounding board, sending reference pages and design proposals to Gemini to receive critical feedback on structure and layout choices. This participant also highlighted that AI had enabled independent implementation of technical features that would previously have required a developer.

An agency founder described an exceptionally deep integration of AI into business operations, using Claude to build websites and developing custom internal systems that automated performance marketing management across client accounts. Another participant in a senior design role described using Claude Code in combination with Figma to build design systems, noting that while the AI could generate structured outputs quickly, manual refinement in Figma remained necessary to reach a finished result.

**Theme 2: Impact on Creativity**

Participants described both the advantages and disadvantages of using AI technologies in their creative processes. Creativity, as participants described it, encompassed the generation of ideas, exploration of design directions, aesthetic judgment, and the emotional engagement that comes from working through a design challenge.

A number of interviewees stressed that rather than taking the place of creative judgment, AI was mostly utilized as a beginning point for ideation. Final creative choices, such as tone, editing style, and visual direction, were consistently said to be left to human professionals. One participant pointed out that while AI gave professionals a base upon which to build, human input and assessment determined the final product's direction and quality.

Simultaneously, several participants voiced concern about the propensity of AI generated outputs to be general. "There are possibilities to explore many design directions quickly, which used to take much longer," one UX designer said, describing a conflict between the speed AI allows and the depth of creative thinking it may diminish. "However, you stop iterating as much as you used to, and it becomes easy to settle for something that is adequate." According to the same participant, AI could damage what they called the design spirit by promoting a systems based mindset as opposed to an emotionally charged creative process: "You sit and write a prompt instead of feeling like you are actually creating something artistic."

A copywriter reflected on the long term risk of over reliance on AI for idea generation, comparing it to always looking at the answer key rather than working through a problem. This participant noted that the process of struggling toward a creative solution was itself a source of professional skill development, and expressed concern that bypassing that process could lead to stagnating creative capabilities over time.

Participants acknowledged that AI may offer novel concepts and viewpoints that enhanced the creative process in spite of their reservations. Many pointed out that AI occasionally revealed content perspectives or design ideas that would not have been thought of otherwise, offering an alternative and occasionally useful way to approach an issue. A graphic designer described asking AI for inspiration images and then illustrating entirely manually, using the AI output only as a starting point.

It is notable that concerns about genericity were associated more strongly with image generation tools and general text based tools, while AI-assisted research and synthesis tools were viewed more positively without the same concerns about creative constraint.

**Theme 3: Efficiency and Time Savings**

Participants frequently highlighted the efficiency improvements that AI technologies have brought to their processes, reporting notable time savings on formerly labor intensive and manual tasks.

Throughout the interviews, specific instances of altered tasks were given. The impact on postproduction labor was explained by one creative director: "Every video's

subtitles used to be written by hand. You only need to make a few adjustments to acquire a 95% accurate transcription in 20 seconds. Additionally, it only takes one click to remove people from photos instead of having to zoom in and carefully trace each edge." Teams were said to be able to take on more work and produce more quickly without sacrificing quality because of these time savings.

Participants in roles that involved a lot of research reported comparable significant early project gains. One UX designer put it this way: "Research that used to take several weeks I can now do in a day." The discovery and definition stages of design work were said to be transformed by the capacity to swiftly synthesize vast amounts of data and recognize patterns.

Participants did point out that there were restrictions on efficiency increases, though. AI outputs were frequently said to need to be reviewed and adjusted by humans before being used. Clear internal norms for the usage of AI were established as a result of several participants' early encounters with unreviewed AI outputs. One creative director observed: "We copied and pasted captions straight from ChatGPT in the beginning, and a client noticed. He said it looked like AI. That taught us something." Participants in all of the interviews stressed the importance of human monitoring in preserving consistency and quality.

**Theme 4: Ethical Concerns and Accountability**

Though their opinions differed in depth and emphasis, participants considered issues of authorship, originality, and accountability when utilizing AI generated content.

A number of participants took a pragmatic approach to ethical issues, stressing the necessity to adjust to industry realities while conceding uncertainties over the sources of AI generated content. "I don't know where it has trained, so I don't know if it has been taken from someone, but I don't know if it would have made a difference," said one creative director. "If you are very restricted, you will simply lag behind everyone else." Participants emphasized that their companies upheld moral standards and that AI was never used to directly replicate or improperly use other people's material.

Concerns over accountability and the dangers of AI in delicate professional settings were voiced by several participants. One specific area of accountability that was

emphasized was confidentiality: "If you are working on a security classified project, it is important not to share sensitive information with AI. That responsibility lies entirely with the person using the tool." Participants also pointed out that careful assessment of AI generated information is a crucial professional duty since AI outputs may represent biases and generalizations.

A design professional with experience across branding and digital product development raised concerns about the opacity of AI training data, noting that the scale at which creative work is incorporated into model training raises copyright and originality questions that the industry has not yet resolved. Another participant described a nuanced view of originality, suggesting that using AI as a source of inspiration and then developing ideas independently still allows the result to be called one's own, whereas directly reproducing AI output without meaningful engagement does not.

Participants in every interview concurred that final permission and human control were essential components of appropriate AI deployment. There has been a continuous stance that AI should do the labor-intensive work of creating original ideas or material, but human experts are still in charge of reviewing, editing, and approving all outputs before they are sent to customers or end users.

**Theme 5: Shifting Professional Roles**

Participants considered how AI was already altering expectations for professionals and predicted more change in the years to come.

Interviews revealed a greater desire to keep up with new AI tools and trends. "What is expected of me now is to be on top of things, always know what is new, how we can be more efficient," said a creative director. "It used to be about being aware of the newest camera. Knowing what AI is capable of is now crucial." It was stated that strategic thinking is becoming increasingly important in all professions, with AI being utilized to support higher level decision making, assess patterns, and guide planning.

Similar shifts toward increased strategic and analytical responsibility were reported by participants in design roles. "The role has definitely become more strategic," one UX designer

observed. "In order to obtain the answers you require, you must plan ahead and consider how to formulate your inquiries and organize your efforts." Future skills were expected to focus on psychological comprehension, artistic judgment, and the capacity to create tone and emotional resonance, qualities that participants believed AI could not imitate.

A number of interviewees projected that AI would have a major impact on some jobs in the near future, especially those involving regular administrative or data processing duties. "At our company, the social media manager position will probably completely disappear. An AI will just handle the scheduling, captions, and everything," one creative director said. "Moving data from A to B is all that is involved." Another position that was shown to be likely to change or shrink was advertising creation.

Participants also stressed that relationships and human interaction would become more, not less, valuable. The most enduring source of professional value going forward has been repeatedly identified as the capacity to uphold real client relationships, be proactive, and offer the kind of nuanced human judgment that AI cannot replicate: "What will be premium is the face to face contact, having actual humans who clients can talk to and who are proactive. People will pay for that."

### RQ1: How are AI tools currently used in graphic design and web development workflows?

The results demonstrate the application of AI technologies in a variety of professional workflow phases, from early research and ideation to production duties including image editing, transcription, and content scheduling. Although the particular tools and applications varied greatly depending on the function and project setting, participants described AI as being deeply ingrained in daily practice. This is broadly in line with the HCI viewpoint presented in the theoretical framework; AI operated as a system that imposed limitations, like the requirement for human oversight and the limitations of working in security-sensitive environments, while also enabling certain actions, like quicker ideation and automation of repetitive tasks (Humble & Cajander, 2025). However, the findings add an important nuance while Humble and Cajander frame constraints primarily in terms of interaction limitations, this study found that some of the most significant constraints were externally imposed through organizational and regulatory restrictions, suggesting that institutional context plays a larger role in AI adoption than the affordances and constraints lens alone captures. This is a finding that existing AI adoption research tends to overlook, as studies focused on how

professionals use AI may miss an equally important group: those who are actively restricted from using it at all. Future research could benefit from giving greater attention to this dimension.

Interestingly, many tool kinds have distinct functions. While picture generating tools were concentrated in the ideation and concept phase and AI integrated software features like automated transcription and backdrop removal were mostly utilized in production, text based AI assistants were used most often throughout the workflow. This internal diversity suggests that professionals have developed a pragmatic and differentiated relationship with AI rather than adopting it uniformly, which adds nuance to the conclusion that AI adoption varies across contexts.

**RQ2: How do professionals perceive the impact of AI tools on creativity and efficiency?**

Participants reported that AI had two effects on creativity: it allowed for quicker idea exploration and less time spent on technical duties, but it also ran the risk of producing generic outputs and diminishing the depth of creative contemplation. Significant improvements in efficiency were frequently reported, especially in the areas of research, transcribing, and image editing. These results are consistent with both the efficiency perspective (Mohamed & Adiloğlu, 2025) and the user-centered design approach, which warns that if AI outputs are accepted without careful review, automation may result in less thoughtful decision-making (Li et al., 2024). Notably however, efficiency gains were consistently described as conditional on human review and adjustment of outputs, suggesting that AI does not simply replace labor but rather shifts it moving effort from execution toward evaluation and quality control.

Concerns about generic outputs were associated particularly with image generation and general purpose text tools, while tools used for research synthesis were viewed as straightforwardly beneficial without the same creative tension. This suggests that the relationship between AI and creativity is not uniform across tool types, and that the type of tool involved matters for how professionals experience AI's creative impact. This distinction represents one of the more original findings of the study, and points to the need for more tool-specific frameworks in future research rather than treating AI as a single category. A further concern raised by participants, and one that existing

efficiency research does not adequately address, is the long term risk of bypassing the creative struggle. One participant compared relying on AI for idea generation to always looking at the answer key rather than working through a problem, suggesting that while AI may improve short term output speed, it could affect the development of creative skill over time. This is a dimension of AI's impact on creativity that warrants attention in future research.

**RQ3: How do professionals reflect on how AI may shape future roles and responsibilities within digital media work?**

Participants expected AI to gradually replace mundane and administrative duties, resulting in a considerable role transition. They did, however, also recognize new types of professional worth that were focused on interpersonal connections, human judgment, and strategic thinking. This is in line with the technology adoption viewpoint, which contends that AI is transforming professional competencies in favor of higher order abilities like user comprehension and creative direction (Cai & Jung, 2024). It is worth acknowledging, however, that this research question is inherently speculative in nature. Participants were reflecting on anticipated futures rather than describing current practice, and their predictions may reflect professional anxieties or aspirations as much as likely outcomes. Notably, predictions about role displacement tended to focus on other positions rather than participants' own roles for instance, the social media manager position was described as likely to disappear, while participants generally positioned their own roles as evolving rather than becoming redundant. This pattern may suggest that professionals are inclined to underestimate the degree to which AI will affect their own work, which is worth considering when interpreting practitioner predictions about the future. The consistency with which participants across different roles independently emphasized human relationships and face-to-face contact as enduring sources of value is nonetheless notable, and suggests this reflects a broader professional awareness rather than individual opinion.

In AI assisted creative work, ethical considerations particularly those related to accountability and confidentiality were found to be increasingly significant aspects of professional duty (Dedijer et al., 2025). Notably, participants described navigating these ethical demands through informal personal frameworks, often in the absence of formal organizational guidelines. This gap between the ethical complexity of AI use

in practice and the lack of institutional support points to a practical need for clearer professional standards, which goes somewhat beyond what the existing ethical literature addresses.

# 5 Discussion

This chapter examines the study's findings in light of the theoretical framework and prior research. The outcomes in connection to the research questions and purpose are discussed in the first section of the chapter, which is followed by a discussion of the methodological decisions and their consequences for the study.

## 5.1 Result discussion

This study looked into how AI technologies are utilized in web development and graphic design, as well as how professionals view their effects on efficiency, creative processes, and professional responsibilities. The study was guided by three research questions: how AI tools are now employed in professional workflows, how professionals view their impact on efficiency and creativity, and how professionals consider how AI can influence future roles and responsibilities. Each research issue is addressed in the discussion that follows in light of the theoretical framework and body of current literature.

**RQ1: How are AI tools currently used in graphic design and web development workflows?**

The results demonstrate the application of AI technologies in a variety of professional workflow phases, from ideation and early research to production duties including image editing, transcription, and content scheduling. This is in line with research by Li et al. (2024), which showed how AI technologies are being included more and more into creative processes to assist with layout development, content generation, and repetitive task automation. In a similar vein, Mohamed and Adiloğlu (2025) demonstrated that AI-assisted features in programs like Adobe software significantly reduced the time and number of steps needed to finish creative work, which is

consistent with participant descriptions of AI-powered transcription and background removal as revolutionary for everyday productivity.

From an HCI standpoint, the results demonstrate what Humble and Cajander (2025) refer to as the dual nature of generative AI, which is a system that both permits and restricts specific actions. Participants viewed AI as facilitating quicker ideation and automation, but they also pointed out specific limits, such as the requirement for ongoing human supervision, AI's limitations in security sensitive settings, and the possibility of creating results that needed substantial modification. Every participant's explanation of how AI was incorporated into their processes revealed this affordances and constraints dynamic.

The variance in AI use across various professional contexts was a noteworthy discovery. While participants in commercial creative companies viewed AI as essential to almost every stage of production, those working with government agencies reported being unable to use AI tools at all in some projects due to secrecy restrictions. This contextual diversity implies that organizational and regulatory considerations significantly influence how and whether AI tools are implemented in practice, and that the integration of AI into professional workflows is not consistent.

**RQ2: How do professionals perceive the impact of AI tools on creativity and efficiency?**

The results showed a complex and occasionally paradoxical link between creativity and AI use. Participants described AI as facilitating quicker idea exploration and cutting down on time spent on technical activities, which is consistent with Mohamed and Adiloğlu's (2025) efficiency perspective. However, a number of participants voiced concerns about the general nature of AI generated outputs and the potential for less thoughtful, creative decision making due to the rapidity of AI assisted labor. This conflict represents what Li et al. (2024) refer to as the possibility that, if AI outputs are accepted without critical evaluation, automation may lead to decision making deviating from reflective design approach.

From the standpoint of user centered design, this conclusion is especially pertinent. Although the UCD framework highlights the significance of keeping end user needs front and center throughout the design process, participants reported instances in

which the speed and ease of AI outputs made it attractive to accept subpar rather than ideal solutions. This implies that in order to maintain the reflective and iterative aspects of excellent design practice, AI incorporation in creative workflows demands conscious effort.

Participants reported significant and consistent increases in efficiency throughout the interviews. Research synthesis, transcription, and image editing were among the tasks that were said to have changed from laborious manual procedures to almost instantaneous ones. These results align with the empirical data reported by Mohamed and Adiloğlu (2025), who found that applying AI assisted features to creative tasks resulted in notable time savings. Participants frequently underlined that these improvements were dependent on human evaluation and modification of AI outputs, indicating that the connection between AI and efficiency is more complex than a simple time savings.

**RQ3: How do professionals reflect on how AI may shape future roles and responsibilities within digital media work?**

Participants predicted that in the upcoming years, routine and administrative duties would be gradually replaced by AI, resulting in a dramatic alteration of professional roles. This is in line with research by Cai and Jung (2024), who contended that AI is changing the graphic design job market by emphasizing higher order skills like strategic thinking, creative direction, and user comprehension. Participants reported a noticeable change in their own roles toward more analytical and strategic duties, with AI taking on a greater proportion of activities at the execution level.

The most enduring sources of professional value in an AI augmented workplace, according to participants, are human interaction, relationship building, and nuanced judgment. This is consistent with the technology adoption approach, which proposes that professionals adjust to AI by rearranging their professional identities and skills around the talents that AI cannot duplicate, rather than just employing it as a tool (Cai & Jung, 2024). This reconfiguration is reflected in the participants' emphasis on proactive communication and in person client connections as potential sources of competitive advantage.

An increasingly significant aspect of professional duty is ethical issues. The ethical features outlined by Dedijer et al. (2025), such as authorship, transparency, and the risk of homogenization in AI assisted creative work, are reflected in the participants' concerns regarding confidentiality, bias, and accountability in AI generated content. Even in the lack of official organizational policies, professionals are creating informal ethical frameworks for AI use in practice, as evidenced by the interviews' persistent focus on human oversight and final approval as non-negotiable features of responsible AI usage.

## 5.2 Method discussion

For this study, which aimed to investigate professional experiences and perspectives rather than quantify variables or test hypotheses, semi structured interviews were a suitable primary data collection approach. Participants were able to elaborate on their experiences in their own words during semi-structured interviews, resulting in rich and contextually grounded data that would not have been available through surveys or other more formal methods. This is in line with the suggestion made by Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), who contend that semi structured interviews are especially appropriate for research projects that seek to comprehend how people interpret their work experiences.

The study's emphasis on organizational contexts of AI use was reinforced by the choice to recruit participants only from hired professionals in the sector, excluding freelancers. This is a drawback, though, since independent designers and developers might have distinct AI adoption experiences that are not reflected in the current research. To present a more comprehensive view of AI utilization across various employment arrangements, future research could benefit from including independent contractors.

According to the principles of qualitative research, which favor depth of understanding above statistical representativeness, the sample of ten participants yielded enough data to discover recurrent themes and patterns throughout interviews (Creswell, 2014). However, the results' applicability to other national and cultural contexts is limited by the emphasis on Swedish professionals, all of whom worked in organisations in Sweden. The experiences reported by participants might reflect organisational cultures, industrial conditions, and regulatory frameworks unique to

Sweden and may not be typical of professional practice in other countries. The sample does not capture a full range of professional contexts within Sweden either: larger corporations, public institutions, and non creative sectors that also use graphic design and web development were not represented.

The interview data was successfully arranged and interpreted using the thematic analysis method described by Braun and Clarke (2006). The possibility of individual interpretation bias was decreased and the analysis's credibility was increased by having both authors code the transcripts independently before comparing and debating their codes. It should be noted, though, that thematic analysis is by its very nature interpretive, and that various researchers using the same data may find different themes or come to different conclusions. Although it cannot be completely removed, this intrinsic limitation of qualitative research can be lessened by being open about the analytical procedure.

The Microsoft Teams digital interview style was useful and made it possible for people in various parts of Sweden to participate. However, in certain situations, the lack of in person interaction might have decreased the depth of rapport between interviewers and participants, which might have affected the participants' readiness to offer more critical or sensitive observations. In order to investigate whether this influences the richness of the data gathered, future research may think about performing more in person interviews.

As noted in the results, this study does not distinguish systematically between different types of AI tools in the analysis, treating them collectively as "AI tools" for most of the discussion. This is a limitation. Participants used a wide variety of tools serving different purposes, and the effects of image generators on creativity, for example, are likely different from the effects of research synthesis tools. Future research could develop a more tool specific analytical framework to capture these differences.

Overall, the study's methodological decisions were suitable for the goals and research objectives, and the results offer insightful information about how web developers and graphic designers view and employ AI tools in their daily work. Although the constraints mentioned above should be considered when interpreting the results, the

study achieves its goal of producing a thorough qualitative understanding of AI tool use among professionals.

# 6 Conclusions and further research

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the study and offers suggestions for further research based on the findings and limitations identified.

## 6.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to look into how AI technologies are utilized in web development and graphic design, as well as how experts view their effects on productivity, creativity, and professional obligations. The problem statement pointed out a gap in the literature: while a lot of research has concentrated on the technical capabilities and efficiency potential of AI tools, less attention has been given to how professionals actually use and integrate these tools in their daily work, as well as how AI use affects ethical obligations, creative processes, and professional roles.

The findings of this study contribute to closing this gap in several ways.

First, the study shows that while AI technologies are deeply ingrained in graphic design and web development professionals' daily workflows, this integration is neither consistent nor unconditional. Depending on the professional function, organizational context, and project objectives, there are significant differences in the particular tools utilized, the stages of the workflow in which AI is applied, and the degree to which AI outputs are trusted and acted upon. This contextual heterogeneity is a significant finding that gives prior research, which has tended to regard AI adoption as a more simple and consistent process, additional nuance.

Second, the study reveals that experts believe AI has two effects on creativity. AI has the potential to reduce the depth of creative thinking and provide generic results, even as it speeds up ideation and design direction discovery. Notably, this tension was more pronounced in connection with image generation and general-purpose text tools than with research and synthesis tools, suggesting that the type of AI tool matters for how creativity is experienced. This result implies that the relationship between AI and creativity is more nuanced than both positive and negative perspectives on AI in design typically recognize. By keeping human oversight and viewing AI as a beginning point rather than a final answer, professionals are managing this complexity in practice. However, this calls for conscious effort and critical awareness, which may not always be acknowledged or supported inside businesses.

Third, the study shows that professionals are anticipating and already experiencing a major shift in their roles due to AI. Strategic thinking, human judgment, and interpersonal skills are becoming increasingly important to professional worth, whereas routine and administrative activities are being replaced. This conclusion suggests that in addition to technical abilities, curriculum and training programs should emphasize strategic, psychological, and relational competencies. This finding has practical consequences for design education and professional development.

Fourth, the study emphasizes how ethical issues related to the use of AI, such as authorship, accountability, confidentiality, and bias, are becoming a more significant aspect of professional responsibility. Although participants talked about creating informal personal frameworks for responsible AI use, it was apparent in multiple interviews that there were no explicit organizational or industry-wide guidelines. This shows that in order to help professionals navigate the obligations associated with AI assisted creative work, clearer ethical frameworks and standards are required.

When considered collectively, these results add to our knowledge of how AI is a sociotechnical system that transforms professional practice, competencies, and duties in the creative digital industries rather than just a technological tool. The study backs the idea that human oversight, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills are still crucial in AI enhanced work settings, and that the increasing power of AI tools does not minimize but rather repositions the importance of human judgment and creativity.

### 6.2 Further research

The findings of this study point to several directions for further research.

First, the results of this study cannot be applied to other national and cultural contexts because it was restricted to working professionals in Sweden. Future studies could look into how AI is used in creative processes by professionals in other nations and cultural contexts, as well as whether the trends found in this study hold true in various regulatory contexts and business cultures.

Second, independent developers and designers were not included in the study. Future research could specifically examine how freelancers experience AI adoption and whether the lack of organizational structures and policies shapes their relationship

with AI tools in unique ways, given that freelancing is a significant and expanding mode of professional practice in the creative industries.

Third, the study found a conflict between creative depth and efficiency that needs more research. Future studies could investigate this tension in greater detail, for instance by comparing the quality of creative output produced by AI assisted and non AI assisted design processes or by tracking the evolution of creative professionals' use of AI over time.

Fourth, a significant but little studied topic is the ethical implications of using AI in creative professional work. Future studies could look into how businesses are creating or failing to create official policies and standards for the responsible use of AI, as well as what assistance experts need to deal with moral dilemmas pertaining to authorship, confidentiality, and bias in content produced by AI.

Fifth, as the study concentrated on web development and graphic design as exemplary creative digital vocations, future research could expand this inquiry to additional creative industries like photography, illustration, or motion design, in order to determine whether comparable patterns of AI adoption, creative influence, and role transformation exist across a wider spectrum of creative disciplines.

Sixth, this study treated AI tools as a broad category, which is a limitation as different tool types appear to have different effects on creativity and professional practice. Future research could develop tool specific frameworks that distinguish between, for example, image generators, text-based AI assistants, and AI-integrated production tools, examining their differential effects on creativity, efficiency, and ethics in more detail.

Lastly, the results of this study represent a specific point in time due to the quick speed at which AI is developing. The long term effects of AI on creative professional work should be better understood through longitudinal research that monitors how professionals' attitudes and behaviors change as AI tools advance.

# 7 References


Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Cai, W., & Jung, H. (2024). The impact of artificial intelligence on the graphic design job market: An analysis of the evolution and opportunities of the designer role. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*. https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5542/2024.08.002

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Dedijer, S., et al. (2025). Ethical dimensions of artificial intelligence in graphic design: Challenges, opportunities and the future of creative practice. *International Journal of Legal and Policy Management*. https://doi.org/10.59476/ilpmt2025.5-14

Humble, N., & Cajander, Å. (2025). Rethinking generative AI in human–computer interaction: Affordances, constraints, and implications. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Education and Research (ICER)*. https://doi.org/10.34190/icer.2.1.3926

Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2015). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Li, Y., et al. (2024). The application and impact of artificial intelligence technology in graphic design. *Heliyon*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e40037

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE Publications.

Mohamed, S., & Adiloğlu, B. (2025). Exploring the impact of AI on graphic design efficiency. *Eurasian Journal of New Media*. https://doi.org/10.17932/IAU.EJNM.25480200.2025/ejnm_v9i2003

# 8 Appendixes

### Appendix 1: Interview Guide

The following guide was used to structure the semi-structured interviews. Follow-up questions were added based on each participant's responses.

**Warm-up questions**

1. Could you briefly describe your role and professional background?
2. How long have you been working in graphic design / web development?
3. What types of projects do you typically work on?

**AI tool usage**

4. Which AI tools do you currently use in your work?
5. In which parts of your work process do you use AI tools?
6. How frequently do you use AI tools?
7. Can you describe a recent project in which AI played a role?
8. Which tasks do you prefer to handle with AI, and which do you prefer to do manually?

**Creativity and efficiency**

9. How do AI tools affect your creative process?
10. In what ways do AI tools affect your efficiency?
11. Do you experience AI as strengthening or limiting your creativity?
12. Has AI changed how you generate ideas?
13. How does AI affect your sense of control over the final result?

**Professional role and identity**

14. Do you think AI has changed what is expected of you as a professional?

15. Has your role become more strategic, more technical, or changed in another way?

16. How do you think AI will change the competencies required in your field?

17. Do you feel pressure to adapt to AI, and in what way?

18. Do you see AI as a tool, an assistant, or a competitor?

**User-centred perspective**

19. When using AI, how do you ensure that the end result still meets users' needs?

20. Do you think AI tools facilitate or complicate user-centred design?

**Ethics and responsibility**

21. How do you think about originality and authorship when using AI?

22. How do you reflect on responsibility when AI-generated content is used?

23. Can you give examples of situations where you would avoid using AI?

**Future perspectives**

24. How do you think AI will affect your profession over the next five years?

25. Do you think AI will replace certain tasks or create new ones, and if so, which?

26. Which competencies do you think will be most important in the future?

27. Is there anything about AI in your work that we have not asked about, which you think is important to raise?

## Appendix 2: Participant Descriptions

The ten participants represented a varied cross section of creative and digital professionals working in Sweden. Their roles spanned graphic design, UX and UI design, web design and development, copywriting, and senior positions such as creative director and agency founder. Two participants worked at the same digital marketing agency, one in a strategic founding role overseeing performance marketing and the other as a creative director responsible for photography and content production. Several participants were employed at digital consultancies, working on projects ranging from financial applications and government services to product development. One participant worked as a graphic designer and communicator within the retail industry, while another worked as a copywriter at an advertising agency focused on campaign concepts and brand communication. The remaining participants brought backgrounds spanning graphic design, web development, and user experience across various organizational contexts.

Experience levels varied considerably across the group, ranging from professionals in the early stages of their careers with approximately three years of experience to highly seasoned practitioners with over twenty five years in the field. This range ensured that the data captured both established perspectives on how the profession has changed over time and fresher viewpoints from those who have grown up alongside the rapid emergence of AI tools. All participants were employed professionals working within organizational settings, which kept the focus of the study on AI adoption within structured work environments rather than independent or freelance practice.