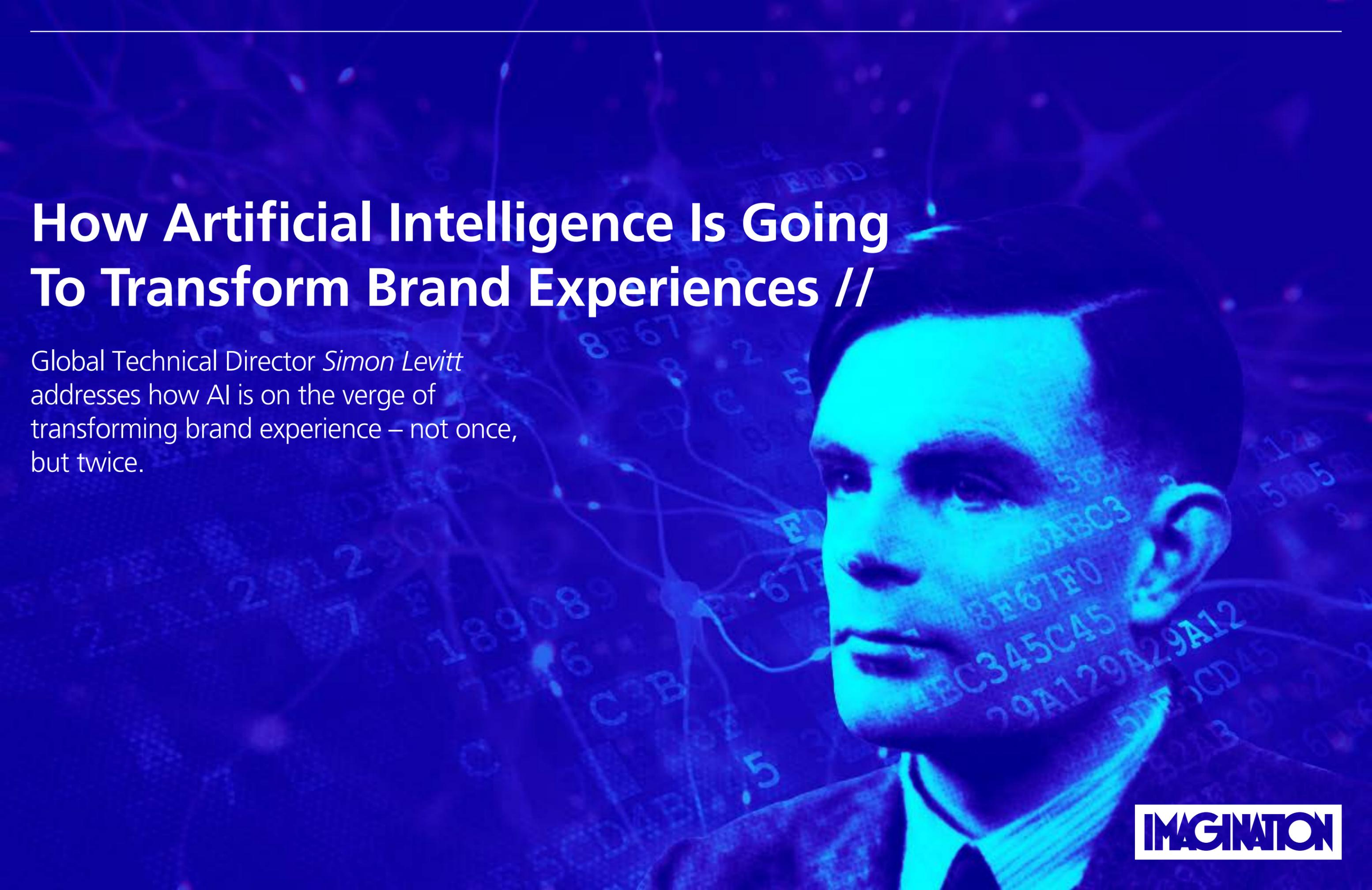

How Artificial Intelligence Is Going To Transform Brand Experiences //

Global Technical Director *Simon Levitt* addresses how AI is on the verge of transforming brand experience – not once, but twice.



IMAGINATION

Understanding how to integrate AI into brand experiences

+ AI Attitudes per Cohort //

Wave One

First, the good news. AI will help you deliver much more personalized experiences. And we know that experiences that are personalized are much more likely to lead to action.

You're already familiar with basic AI – Amazon's recommendation engine ("Customers who bought this item also bought...") and YouTube's autoplay are just two examples. You might even have tried the computer programs that create instant videos, which are the domestic versions of professional programs that can create real movie trailers in less than 24 hours, rather than the 10-30 days it takes humans.

But now, thanks to plummeting costs of hardware and data crunching, AI is on the verge of serving up personalized information real-time in physical, as well as digital, brand experiences.

Imagine a (near) future where high-speed video analysis can track your attendance, behaviors and interests at a public event, then a retail outlet and then a brand experience center before – crushingly fast – analyzing all of that to serve up customized content and messaging that is spookily interesting to you.

We're already experimenting with this. At a recent auto show, we trialed a behavioural analytics system that enabled us to track what people do, where they go, demographics (gender, average age) and their emotions to calculate:

- Their dwell time on a particular exhibitor's stand
- Which vehicles they spent time looking at
- Which vehicles they physically got into, and how long they spent in them
- Which exhibits they spent time engaging with.

All of that data could power much richer conversations when those show goers visited a dealership, as well as delivering much more personally-relevant information via digital media.

Wave Two

And now, the bad news. If, for a moment, we can set aside the very real concerns about AI ethics (a [recent report](#) offers some solace on the subject), there's a very particular marketing problem that arises: AI is likely to diminish differentiation and increase homogenization of brands and experiences.

The argument goes like this: Because AI's main benefit is that it can run countless iterations of responses to find the "best" one, all programs will alight on the same answer. And therefore, the response from every brand in a category will end up being the same. The product itself, and its presentation, will be 'optimized' to the single, optimum expression.

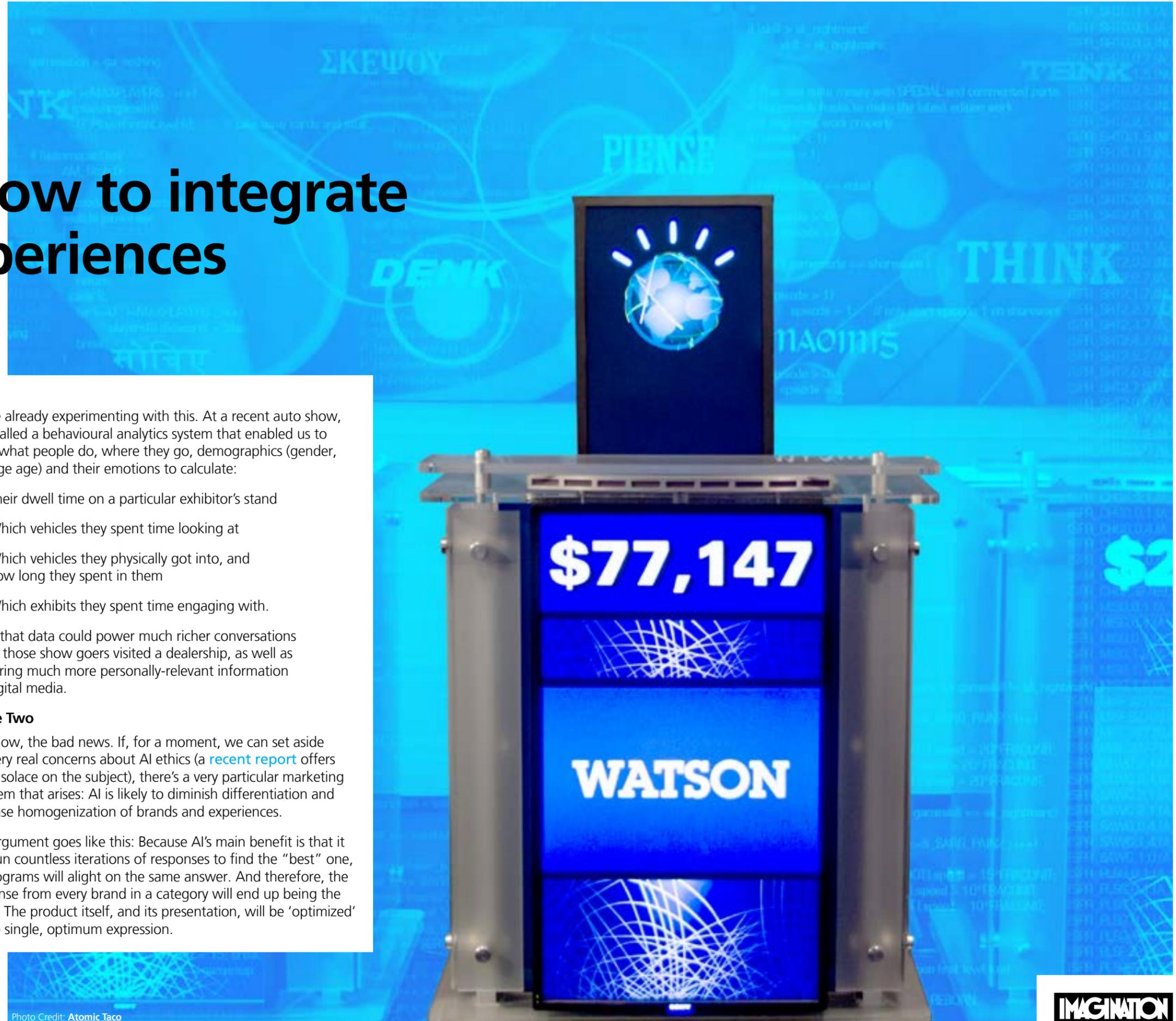


Photo Credit: Atomic Taco



“The typical person’s media diet is, in effect, already designed by computer-based diet nutritionists.”

Strategy and Business, Summer 2017

What To Do?

- 1** You need to understand your target audience’s reaction to the whole concept of AI, and plan accordingly. Different age groups are likely to behave very differently. (see page 4)
- 2** Consider how AI could help you present more relevant messages – for example, could and should video content change across a display if AI detects a large number of a particular audience? Should lighting or sound change as well, to reflect that audience’s interests and physical capabilities?
- 3** Much of the commentary about AI envisages it replacing humans. But the [more thoughtful analyses](#) acknowledge that there are some roles that humans are uniquely adept at. How could AI augment the human aspects of your brand experience? And how could humans use AI’s outputs to make your brand experience uniquely engaging?

What is AI?

It’s the ability to crunch information you already have really fast, and use the result – in real time – to serve up information or change the experience offered to an individual or group.

What Does AI Look Like?

If you saw IBM’s Watson win Jeopardy!, or you have an Alexa at home, or you’ve asked your home computer to sort your photos by who’s in them, you’ve experienced early AI.

Getting Your Business AI-ready

To be able to effectively use AI in marketing, now and in the future, you need to start with data, the DNA of an AI system. Companies have already recognized the importance of big data and are now beginning to consolidate it, helping them understand the customer in more detail, and allowing for unique, personalized marketing.

The more your engagements are tracked digitally, and at a higher volume, the better you can use AI. It’s about the data you have on your users. At the moment AI for marketing revolves around:

- Machine Learning; seemingly intelligent decisions and recommendations made for your customers
- Business Intelligence; being able to, in real time, predict customer churn and the potential to up-sell
- MarTech; Being able to hyper-personalize communications such as emails.

AI Attitudes – By Cohort

Katie Streten

Global Head of Consumer Research & Insight

When AI is useful and not obvious, all generations display high levels of comfort with the results. Think about the value we place on the chat bots that provide simple answers to our questions or the way that Siri is able to parse our voices and offer search results based on that. These are simple examples of AI that work to enhance our lives.

But when we consider more overt and obvious examples of AI, the way that different age groups embrace it may be different.

Today, we are used to seeing toddlers trying to swipe 'broken iPads' (printed magazines), and museum and trade show visitors of all ages assuming that every video screen they encounter is a touchscreen.

Very shortly, those same visitors will think that any three-dimensional space that doesn't react to them, and serve up content that's relevant to them, is dumb. And not worth spending any time in.

AI Learning

Imagination is hosting Lunch & Learn sessions about the impact of AI on brand experiences. If you'd like to join one – without any obligation – please contact Andrew Horberry.

Email Andrew Horberry at
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Gen Z

Born into the 'always-on' society, so more immediately accepting of AI-driven content.

Gen Y

Relaxed with anything that makes their lives easier, but savvy to the ways that brands can use technology to intrude into their lives – e.g. this generation more than any other uses ad blocking software. Your AI has to be simple, clever and valuable, not intrusive or overtly self-serving.

Gen X

Sat neatly between the Millennials and the Boomers, they'll readily accept AI that makes their lives easier, but will wait to see if what you're offering is genuinely useful to them. Trust is essential.

Boomer

Accustomed to "fixed" media (printed newspapers, regular time-slot news bulletins), so initially suspicious of media that changes constantly. Concerned about data privacy.