

The AI Enigma:

Where Enthusiasm Meets Uncertainty

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Citizens and AI

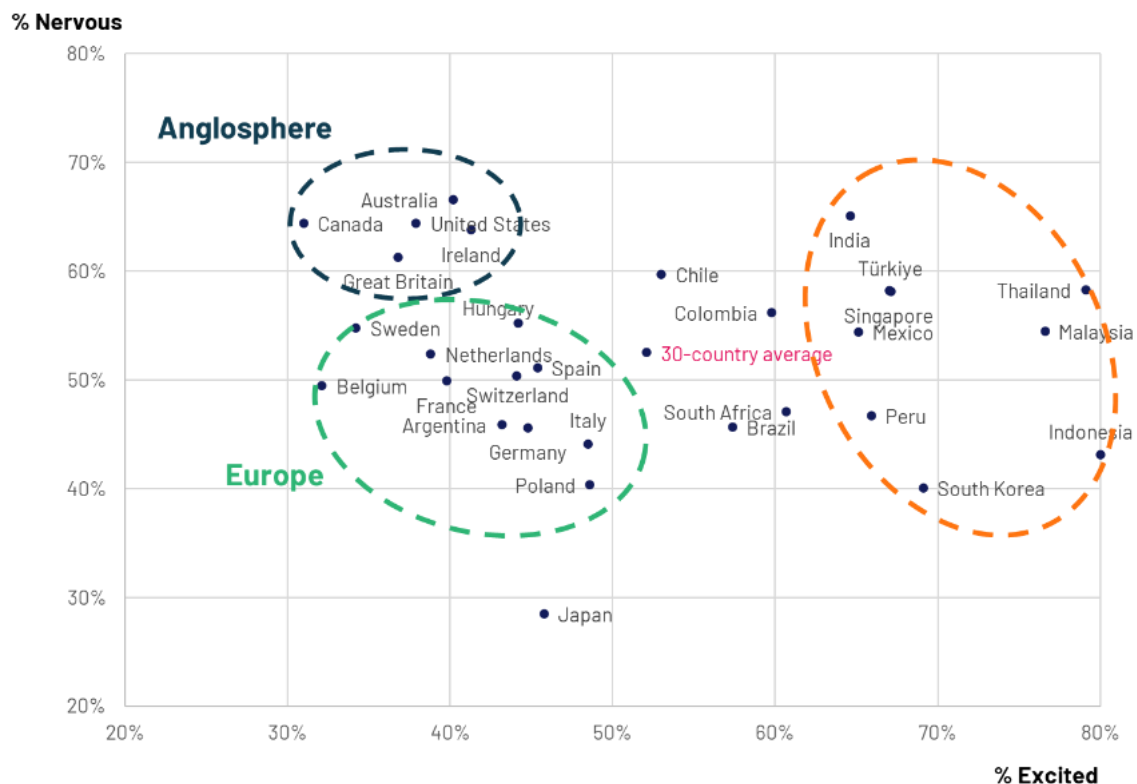
Across the world, citizens seem to be as excited as they are apprehensive about AI – the present and, more so, the future. While it is undeniable that AI has touched all our lives, as is evident from Ipsos' AI Monitor, the sentiments around it are mixed. While there is anticipation about AI's capabilities, there are also significant concerns, especially around trust and regulation. Among the key concerns of global citizens are exacerbation of job-market challenges (which continues to be one of the biggest worries for global citizens in Ipsos' "What Worries the World" monitor), and the spread of disinformation. Optimism and wonder come more from increased productivity and creativity at work, removing tedious tasks from daily routines, and the sheer anticipation of what AI is going to bring next in terms of excitement and wonder (remember Ghibli images, controversy aside?).

Indians vs. Rest of the World

The same AI monitor throws up interesting differences between citizens of different geographies. The Anglosphere (US, UK, Canada, Australia) appear to be the most wary → high on nervousness while low on excitement. Europe and Japan appear to be more nonchalant, neither too nervous not too excited. Citizens from the APAC and some LATAM countries show the most optimism → not too worried, but excited about the prospects of AI.

Indians occupy a somewhat unique position – while our excitement is at par with our APAC counterparts, we seem to be fairly nervous as well.

How are Countries placed on excitement vs. worry for AI



Source: Ipsos AI Monitor 2025



We, as a country, are up there in terms of strongest agreement about AI changing our lives, jobs, personal health and overall economy profoundly in the next 3-5 years.

Indians are also more keen than the average global citizen to see AI make a positive impact in creative and curative tasks, such as...

- Enhancing product images/ Creating images or videos used in advertising
- Writing product descriptions or instructions, and product reviews
- AI-driven content – both text and video

On the other hand, we are fairly sceptical about AI or its usability in a few areas, where errors may lead to unpleasant experiences or outcomes. Some salient ones where we are “lower” than the global average in terms of AI’s felt impact...

- AI’s usage in screening job applications
- Usage in creative tasks like scripts for TV shows, movies, or even news editorial content
- In creating political ads
- Order taking at restaurants



The Transformation in Marketing Services

The Wonder

The integration of Artificial Intelligence is fundamentally reshaping the market research and other marketing services' landscape, mirroring a broader transformation across society. Practitioners have enthusiastically adopted AI, initially to automate tedious, repetitive tasks and reclaim time for more strategic and creative work. This initial embrace has empowered enterprising professionals to engineer custom prompts that condense once-lengthy activities into moments. Beyond efficiency, AI is also augmenting creative and articulative capabilities.

This technological shift is not merely operational; it's driving significant business and industry-wide evolution. At an organizational level, AI has become a catalyst for innovation, enabling rapid creation, testing, and launch of new client solutions. At an industry level, a new wave of agile, AI-Native boutiques has emerged, challenging the dominance of larger, legacy firms with disruptive models.

The ripple effects are clear in client-agency dynamics. Clients are leveraging the efficiency gains of AI to challenge partners on budgets and timelines more rigorously than ever before. In fact, 58% of brands now expect to pay less for agency services where AI is deployed. Consequently, performance metrics are increasingly tied to the successful utilization of AI and the cost savings it generates.

While these trends of opportunity and disruption are pronounced in Market Research and Insights, they are not isolated. Parallel transformations are occurring across Media Planning, Creative specialists, Account Planning and Brand Consultancy - AI is streamlining workflows and enhancing strategic capabilities across. This disruption extends to the client or buyer side as well, fundamentally altering the roles and responsibilities of marketing services buyers. Across this entire ecosystem, job descriptions are being redefined and forcing a re-evaluation of skills and value.

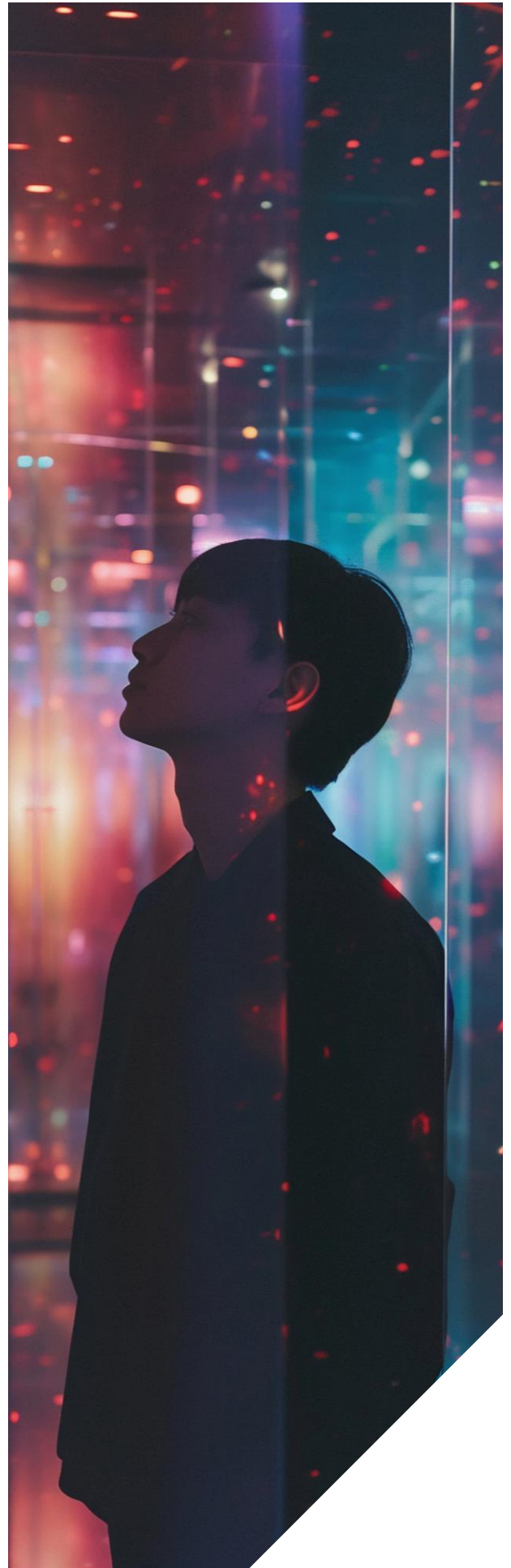


The Worry

While there is considerable enthusiasm surrounding AI, professionals in Market Research and other Marketing Services are experiencing certain apprehensions. The following key concerns have been identified:

- 1. Upskilling Imperative:** There is a pressing need for professionals to enhance their skill sets. However, the rapidly evolving nature of AI technology poses challenges in identifying clear, ROI-driven upskilling pathways.
- 2. Job Security:** Despite the positive impact of AI on current work processes, there are concerns about long-term job stability and potential redundancies.
- 3. Evolving Recruitment Landscape:** Human Resources departments are facing the challenge of sourcing new skill sets, moving away from traditional recruitment strategies such as direct competitor hiring or large-scale MBA graduate intakes.
- 4. Budget Scrutiny:** On the client side, senior management and P&L leaders are reassessing service budgets, including those for Market Research. Internal teams, such as Consumer & Market Insights (CMI) and Media Budget managers, are under pressure to leverage AI, reduce investments, and increase ROI.
- 5. Shifting Client-Agency Dynamics:** With AI enabling more in-house capabilities, clients are increasingly managing projects internally, potentially competing with third-party service providers.
- 6. The apprehension of Mediocrity:** Depending too much on AI may lead to a lack of rigour, especially if AI-generated outputs and outcomes are not thoroughly checked or vetted by the Human eye. Companies that fail to implement robust human oversight and validation processes may risk a decline in quality and miss nuanced insights that AI alone might overlook

These factors collectively indicate potential disruptions in workflow processes, revenue models, and required skill sets.



Emerging Opportunities

Despite these challenges, the AI revolution presents numerous opportunities for growth and innovation:

1. **Adaptability Premium:** Professionals who demonstrate an open mindset, quickly upskill, and align their working methods with emerging trends are likely to benefit from new opportunities.
2. **Convergence of Specialisations:** We anticipate a reduction in barriers between various marketing service specialisations, potentially leading to mergers and integrated service offerings.
3. **Cross-functional Expertise:** The evolving landscape may create exciting prospects for professionals who can adapt and bridge multiple areas of expertise.

In conclusion, while the AI-driven transformation presents certain challenges, it also offers significant opportunities for those willing to embrace change and continuously evolve their skill sets in line with industry demands.



At Ipsos, we champion the unique blend of Human Intelligence (HI) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to propel innovation and deliver impactful, human-centric insights for our clients.

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