Lab-Grown Marketing

The AI-Powered Playbook For Research, Strategy, & Tactics

EVIDENZA

Contents

Welcome to the Synthetic Century

Synthetic always wins.

Over the past century, we've learned to generate what nature once rationed. When we move production into the lab, the curve bends. Scarce resources become abundant, slow processes become fast, and quality always improves. Vanilla, rubber, diamonds, insulin—different stories, same arc.

Marketing is next.

A Brief Tour of Synthetic History

The synthetic revolution starts with vanilla.

In the 1800s, real vanilla beans were sourced from hand-pollinated orchids from a few equatorial regions and priced like saffron. Then chemists isolated vanillin and scaled it. Overnight, a "special-occasion spice" became a "staple" in every kitchen, not because we lowered our standards, but because synthetic production married flavor with affordability.

Rubber followed a similar arc. Tapping rubber trees couldn't match wartime demand for tires, gaskets, and wiring. Synthetic rubber (first commercialized in 1909) unlocked supply, collapsed cost, and propelled the growth of entire transportation industries.

Diamonds might be the most famous example. In 1954 General Electric recreated mantle-level pressure inside a press. Quality climbed while price fell. Today the complaint about lab-grown stones isn't that they're inferior, it's that they're too perfect and too big.

VANILLA
1874

RUBBER
1909

DIAMONDS
1954

INSULIN
1978

Even insulin flipped to synthetic. Early patients relied on crude animal extracts from the pancreases of cows and pigs, leading to scarce human supplies. Recombinant DNA stabilized global supply, improved purity, and lowered cost for millions who need daily injections.

Two patterns emerge: synthetic methods tend to outperform over time, and the breakthroughs almost always start in B2B contexts (industrial chemistry and supply chains) before the benefits come to consumer marketers.

Marketing's Turn to go Synthetic

For a century, marketing has been almost entirely organic: people field research, debate strategy, and craft creative by hand. AI will radically change these processes. Lab-Grown Marketing is our term for applying AI across the whole chain (research, strategy, and tactics) so teams can learn faster, plan smarter, and ship on-brand work at scale.

Today's headlines fixate on copy bots and auto-generated images. These are useful applications of AI, but represent just a sliver of the upside. The real shift happens upstream of creative: instant market insight, living segmentations, scenario-based planning, and finance-ready forecasting, capabilities that used to be slow, pricey, or impossible (especially in B2B).

Here's a revealing moment: we recently spoke at an insurance conference in London. We asked the audience of 60+ senior marketers to raise their hand if they'd ever completed a proper segmentation study. Only three hands went up. Cost, time, and risk kept everyone else on the sidelines. As we will see, synthetic respondents invert that math. You can field a statistically sound study in hours, iterate on a deck in days, and walk into a board meeting with evidence instead of vibes.

That moment isn't an outlier. It's a preview of the Synthetic Century: the shift from scarce, manual inputs to lab-grown, abundant systems. Marketing won't just get cheaper; it will get smarter, faster, and safer as synthetic methods move from the lab to the boardroom.

What this Report Delivers

The pages ahead map ten Synthetic Advantages across Research, Strategy, and Tactics. You'll see how each advantage compounds the next:

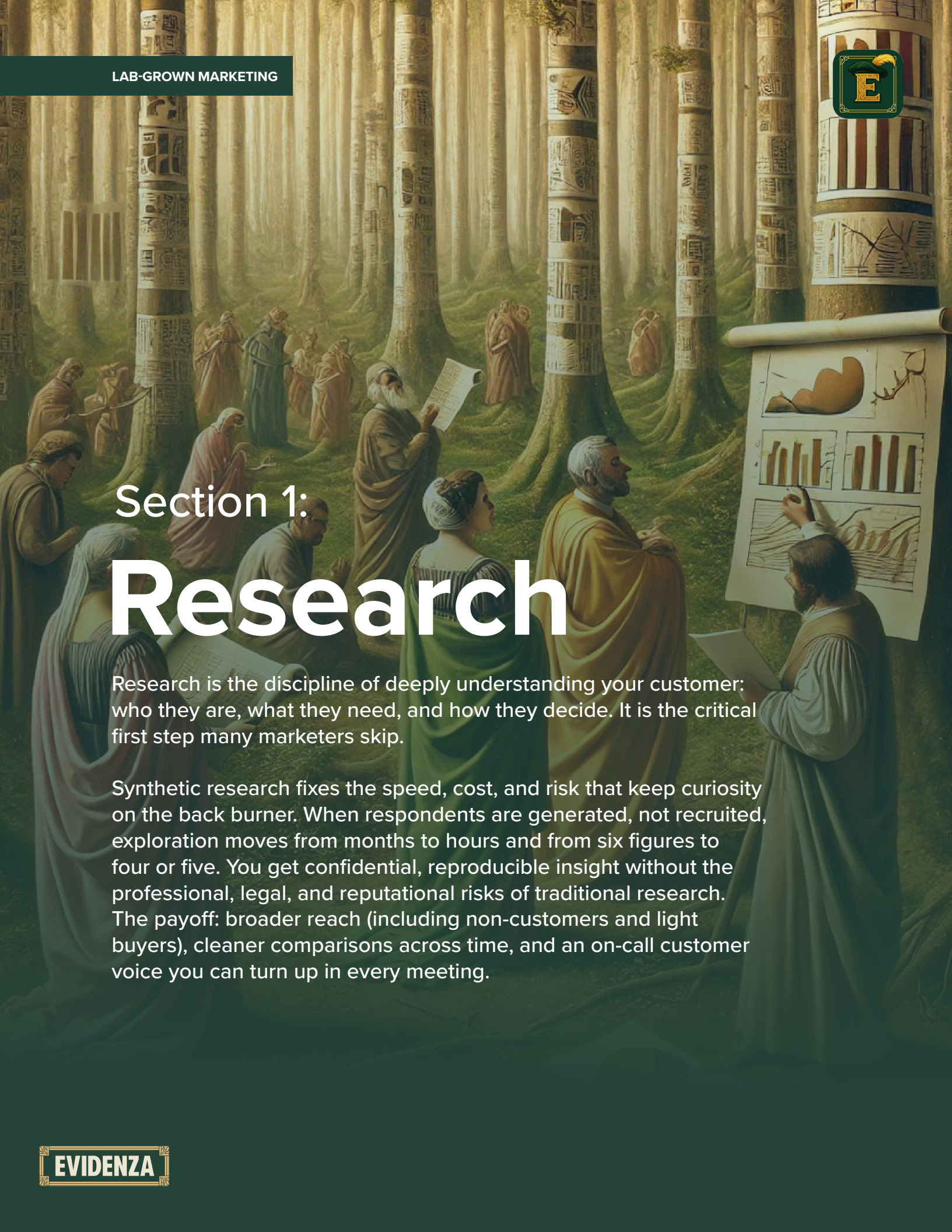
Research goes from scarce to abundant (cheap, fast, and safe), so teams ask better questions more often.

Strategy becomes a living simulation so plans are selected for risk-adjusted upside, not presentation flair.

Tactics systematize brand delivery so teams can define, test, enforce, and scale distinctive creative with on-code governance and measurable impact.

Our aim is to move the conversation beyond "can AI write headlines?" to a finance-literate operating model for Lab-Grown Marketing, one that makes the discipline stronger, more accountable, and (yes) more creative.

We believe this report can serve as a working manual for the next 12 months. If a principle isn't visible in next quarter's plan, re-consider the plan. The synthetic century rewards teams that convert ideas into systems and systems into results.



Section 1:

Research

Research is the discipline of deeply understanding your customer: who they are, what they need, and how they decide. It is the critical first step many marketers skip.

Synthetic research fixes the speed, cost, and risk that keep curiosity on the back burner. When respondents are generated, not recruited, exploration moves from months to hours and from six figures to four or five. You get confidential, reproducible insight without the professional, legal, and reputational risks of traditional research. The payoff: broader reach (including non-customers and light buyers), cleaner comparisons across time, and an on-call customer voice you can turn up in every meeting.

Synthetic Advantages:

1. The Empty Chair

Gives teams the customer voice on demand, letting the empty chair finally speak.

2. The Cost of Curiosity

Makes exploration cheap enough to ask better questions more often.

The Hallucination Problem

Replaces memory and opinion with verified, reproducible readouts—so trust can be audited, not assumed.

4. The Zero-Risk Zone

Delivers insight without repercussions by removing the Research-Ruin Triangle.

Advantage #1:

The Empty Chair

Bring The Buyer Into Every Decision

“We start with the customer and we work backwards.”
— Jeff Bezos

For years, Amazon's founder has kept an unused chair at every senior meeting. The prop is more than a quirk: it forces decision-makers to imagine a silent attendee—the customer—and judge every idea against that person's needs. The ritual is famous because the reality it underscores is eye-opening: modern companies make thousands of marketing decisions each year—product tweaks, campaign messages, segment picks, pricing moves, channel bets. Physically planting a CIO, a dentist, or a parent of three in the room for each call would grind business to a halt.

So most "customer-centric" organizations improvise. They rely on proxies—sales anecdotes, social chatter, web analytics—because true voice-of-customer work is slow and pricey. Even Bezos warns his teams to ship when they have ≈ 70 % of the data; anything more, he says, risks missing the window of opportunity. Yet a recent Evidenza synthetic survey shows only 10.6 % of marketers ever reach that modest bar with formal quantitative research.

"By the time traditional insights arrive, they're already outdated, so marketers default to faster, less representative alternatives."

The Research Gap

Our survey revealed the ad hoc methods most marketers use to gain insight into their customers and helped us understand why the chair is always empty. The short answer? Traditional research is too hard. Teams wait months for survey results, weeks for focus groups, and even longer for comprehensive reports. By the time insights arrive, they're already outdated, so marketers default to faster, less representative alternatives. In B2C, marketers fall back on reviews and social media. In B2B, marketers walk across the office floor to speak with the sales reps.

Segment	% using	Default data source	Why the shortcut happens
B2B	72%	Sales anecdotes	60.9% say CEOs, CIOs, or other niche buyers are nearly impossible to recruit at scale.
B2C	73%	Reviews and social chatter	Easy to gather, but heavily skewed toward vocal buyers rather than the silent majority of non-customers.

Both shortcuts distort reality. Real growth lives with light buyers and non-customers—people who rarely leave reviews and never call your rep.

The Cost of Guessing

When teams optimize messaging around the loudest fans or the latest deal-desk anecdote, they over-invest in features insiders already love and under-invest in the propositions that could attract the next wave of adopters. Roadmaps skew toward incremental improvements; demand-gen budgets chase ever-smaller look-alike audiences. When working with clients, we routinely uncover double-digit percentages of planned spend channeled into tactics that resonate with only a small slice of the addressable market.

The empty chair isn't just symbolic; it represents millions in opportunity cost every fiscal year.

"Synthetic personas answer with the nuance, needs, and aspirations of a real individual—available on demand at a fraction of traditional fieldwork costs."

Enter the Lab-Grown Customer

Generative AI re-opens the empty chair and allows us to seat a living, data-rich proxy—a synthetic customer—in every discussion. What exactly is a synthetic customer, and why should a B2B marketer trust it?

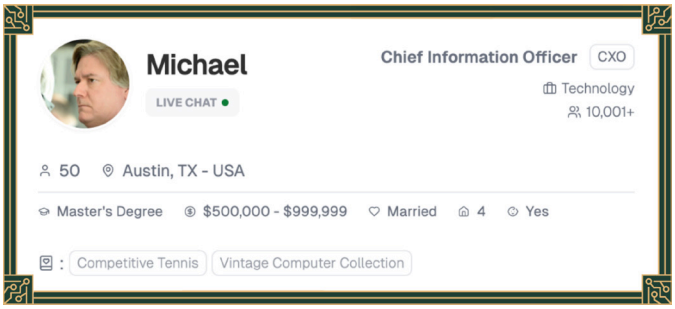
How a Synthetic Customer Is Built

Synthetic customers are AI-generated copies of real customers. Think of it as fusing public records, digital breadcrumbs, and attitudinal signals into a single conversational model—so the persona you query isn't a cardboard profile but a richly textured stand-in for your ideal buyer.

Start with firmographics and demographics to fill in details such as role, seniority, company size, geography, age, income, and education—pulled from public registries and commercial databases. Layer behavioral breadcrumbs next. Details like articles shared, code committed, patents filed, Stack Overflow threads posted, and conference talks given reveal topical expertise, risk tolerance, and tech adoption curves. Blend psychographic signals, using academic research, social-graph cues, and industry language patterns to infer values, openness to change, and decision style. These aspects are fine-tuned with domain-specific LLMs. Comprehensive datasets train a large language model that can speak like the archetype, reason through trade-offs, and cite plausible evidence for its choices. Finally, validate with human spot-checks.

Result: An "impersona" that answers with the nuance, needs, and aspirations of a real human—available on demand at a fraction of traditional fieldwork costs.

Meet Michael



- **Chief Information Officer at a 10,000-employee SaaS firm**
- **51 years old, Austin-based, master's degree**
- **Household income ≈ $700 K**
- **Hobbies: vintage computer collecting & competitive tennis**

Behind those headlines sit thousands of micro-traits: preferred procurement cycles, openness to open-source software, appetite for vendor consolidation, even favorite leadership books. Imagine briefing this synthetic CIO on a new zero-trust platform: within minutes he can outline deal-breaker requirements, rank proof-of-concept criteria, and draft an RFP scoring sheet—giving product, marketing, and sales teams the same north-star perspective before the first human call is booked. Need a rheumatologist in Munich, a mining foreman in Western Australia, or a CHRO vetting payroll systems? Spin them up in seconds.

Research at the Speed of Curiosity

What kinds of research can you run with synthetic customers?

Qualitative: Chat-Depth Interviews.

With a single prompt, you can interview Michael about his last cloud-security renewal, probe unmet needs, or stress-test a headline offer. Clone a procurement lead and a line-of-business VP, and you have a focus group that never cancels, never asks for a gift card, and never holds back to spare the feelings of your sales directors.

Quantitative: Overnight Surveys.

Prefer hard numbers? Push a 20-question survey to 1,000 synthetic CIOs before lunch, wake up to a dashboard of statistically robust results. One Evidenza client asked what would spur employers to switch 401(k) providers. The winner—lower or more transparent fees—scored 22%, edging out wider investment options at 18%. By contrast, enhanced digital tools and mobile apps scored 7.2%, and personalized participant education and engagement scored 5.3%. That type of study once cost six figures and six months. Today, it clears in days for a fraction of the traditional budget.

Mixed-Method in One Pass.

Old-school research forced a trade-off: go deep with qual or go wide with quant. Synthetic methods erase the boundary. Every multiple-choice response can spawn infinite verbatim follow-ups, giving teams the what and the why in one pass.

Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Decision hygiene & bias checks.** Counterbalances sales anecdotes and heavy-buyer noise with representative voices (incl. non-customers).
- **Shared judgment standard.** Bake “on-call customer” evidence into PRDs/creative briefs so teams compare options on the same criteria.
- **Early-line clarity.** Surface deal-breakers (must-haves, red-flags) before resourcing to keep roadmaps focused.

Putting the Empty Chair to Work

Put simply, lab-grown customers fill the empty chair in every meeting. Synthetic research turns every marketer into a customer advocate and rapid tinkerer, shrinking the gap between question and answer.

First Step

Think about the audience you have the most trouble reaching—then spin up 1,000 synthetic look-alikes to pressure-test next quarter’s messaging in just 48 hours, or explore their price-sensitivity overnight.

Bada Bing, Bada Boom

The customer is no longer a metaphorical seat-filler—it’s an on-call voice that shows up the instant you need it.

Advantage #2:

The Cost of Curiosity

Research for Every Decision

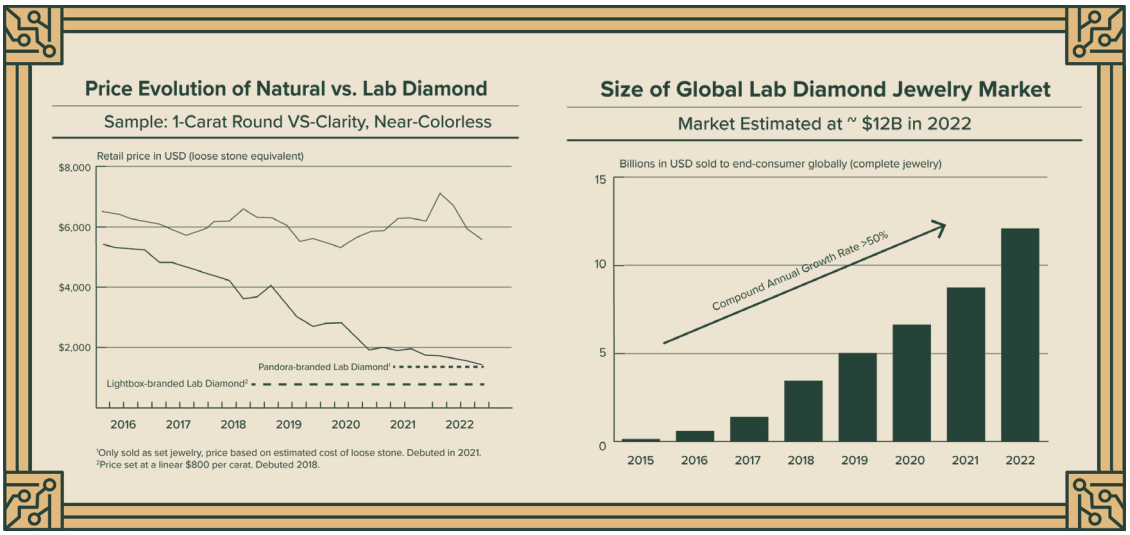
“Given the demonstrable value that experimentation can generate, why aren’t more companies adopting and cultivating an experimentation-centric culture?”
— Stefan Thomke

Curiosity has always carried a price tag.

Until recently, it was often prohibitively expensive. In the analog era, every respondent carried a visible price tag: recruiter fees, incentives, travel, tabulation. A single multi-country study of C-suite buyers could absorb $300,000 and a quarter of the marketing calendar. Start-ups skipped the exercise. Even global brands rationed it for once-a-year, bet-the-company decisions: new-product launches, brand overhauls, market entries.

Slowly, Then Synthetically: Lessons From Lab-Grown Diamonds

When General Electric coaxed the first lab-grown diamond out of a press in 1954, the stone was almost as pricey as its mined counterpart. But synthetic economics compound. Process tweaks, energy efficiencies, and scale pushed the cost per carat down; demand responds in kind. From nearly zero sales in 2015, lab-grown diamonds now top $20-25 billion (roughly 10% of the total diamond market) and are expanding at roughly 50% CAGR. De Beers wasn't unseated overnight. The shift happened slowly, then synthetically.



The same curve is unfolding in market insight: the marginal cost of posing a question to an AI respondent now lands in the low hundreds, not the tens of thousands once required. Scheduling? Instant. Honoraria? Zero. A qualitative probe that once took three weeks and a project manager now runs over lunch. In our work, a synthetic poll often costs about what you'd spend on a one-day paid-search burst, a boosted Instagram post, or a single round of agency creative revisions, well within everyday marketing spend.

Yet lower cost doesn't mean lower fidelity, as we'll cover in the next trend. Synthetic panels can be weighted to match real-world incidence rates, so a sample of 1,000 cloud-security buyers still mirrors the 18% who sit in finance, the 27% in operations, and so on.

Key Takeaway: When the cost curve bends, usage pattern bends faster, and a niche tool becomes a daily habit.

"The marginal cost of posing a question to an AI respondent now lands in the low hundreds, not the tens of thousands once required."

Lower cost also unlocks scope. Because a survey no longer burns half the quarter's spend, teams can validate questions that used to be deemed too small or frivolous: webinar titles, subject lines, error message copy, onboarding steps, and even after-party names. One of our B2B technology clients tested four event nicknames overnight and found "ER-Party" beat "Supply Chain & Champagne" by a four-to-one margin, an insight that would have died in procurement at six-figure prices.

Three Freedoms Unlocked by a 2x-10x Price Drop

When research costs fall by an order of magnitude, three freedoms emerge in sequence.

Democratization comes first. Insight that once belonged to global brands now reaches seed-stage start-ups and regional teams. A craft-soda challenger can vet the same message framework Coca-Cola validates for a Super Bowl spot, on a Series A budget.

Finally, price compression delivers velocity. Moving from traditional to digital to synthetic shortens the question-to-confidence loop by roughly 100×, which allows you to bring the right ideas to market faster. Winning concepts flow straight into A/B funnels on Optimizely or Google Optimize, so live traffic validates creative while product squads stay two sprints ahead.

To be clear, synthetic studies are cheaper, not cheap, landing at roughly 10%-25% of historical spend. That still lets most teams run several tightly-scoped tests for the price of one legacy survey while keeping platform economics healthy.

"When seemingly small choices get data-backed in hours, curiosity becomes routine and every release ships smarter."

From Annual Epics to Daily Drills

In the pre-synthetic era, research briefs surfaced once a year, focused on million-dollar questions like “Should we enter LATAM?”, and involved only the C-suite and an outside consultancy. Insight arrived slowly, often too late to influence in-year execution.

Once costs fall to a fraction of the old outlay, those annual epics fragment into daily drills. Growth squads now debate whether “No-SQL in No Time” outperforms “Zero-Trust Starts Here” in an email subject line, or which webinar title doubles registrations among pharma compliance officers. Product-led teams, lifecycle marketers, even interns, pose a question, spin up a panel, and feed an answer back into the sprint backlog before the next stand-up.

Not every organization wants to sprint immediately. Many start with a monthly curiosity window. During one week each month, regional demand-gen leads or product-marketing managers surface bite-sized questions: Which segment should we prioritize next quarter? What’s the biggest adoption blocker for mid-market healthcare buyers? Which category-entry point will most reliably capture in-market intent?—run mini-studies, and fold the findings into the following sprint. Within a quarter, the company doubles its learning cadence with zero additional headcount.

When seemingly small choices get data-backed in hours, curiosity becomes routine and every release ships smarter: no procurement panic, no budget blunders.

Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Innovation metabolism.** Compress cycles from quarters to days so small curiosities feed continuous discovery and compound organizational learning.
- **Decision scope.** Empower teams to test routine questions and choices, creating a culture of evidence-based decisions and performance excellence.
- **Long-tail mapping.** Use instant insight and living segmentations to probe micro-audiences and messages.

Putting Curiosity to Work

Put simply, cheaper, faster research turns exploration into a daily reflex. When a question costs hundreds and takes hours, teams ask more and learn faster. Synthetic panels let you validate small choices without derailing roadmaps, and they keep debate cycles short because everyone sees the same evidence.

First Step

Think of an audience that would be prohibitively expensive to reach (e.g., C-suite executives or specialist physicians), then launch a synthetic panel of 1,000 look-alikes overnight to pressure-test next quarter's message or probe price sensitivity before you lock the deck.

Bada Bing, Bada Boom

When curiosity is practically free, ignorance is the only cost you can't afford.

Advantage #3:

The Hallucination Problem

Research for Every Decision

“The signal is the truth. The noise is what distracts us from the truth.” — Nate Silver

Most marketers know the moment: a call turns tense when the resident skeptic declares a result “wrong” because it violates their prior beliefs. Add AI-generated answers to the mix, and the volume goes up. New tools are easy to distrust and even easier to swat away.

But what if the machine isn’t the weak link?

We’ve seen it ourselves, ever since launching Evidenza two years ago.

Once upon a time, we held a demo with an agency skeptic. Probing for weaknesses, he pressed us to ask a synthetic German customer if they had ever heard of “TOTO Toilets.” When the synthetic customer responded that they had recently considered TOTO when remodeling his house, but decided against it because of cost, the skeptic was triumphant. He insisted a synthetic German buyer couldn’t possibly know the TOTO brand because “it’s only sold in Japan.”

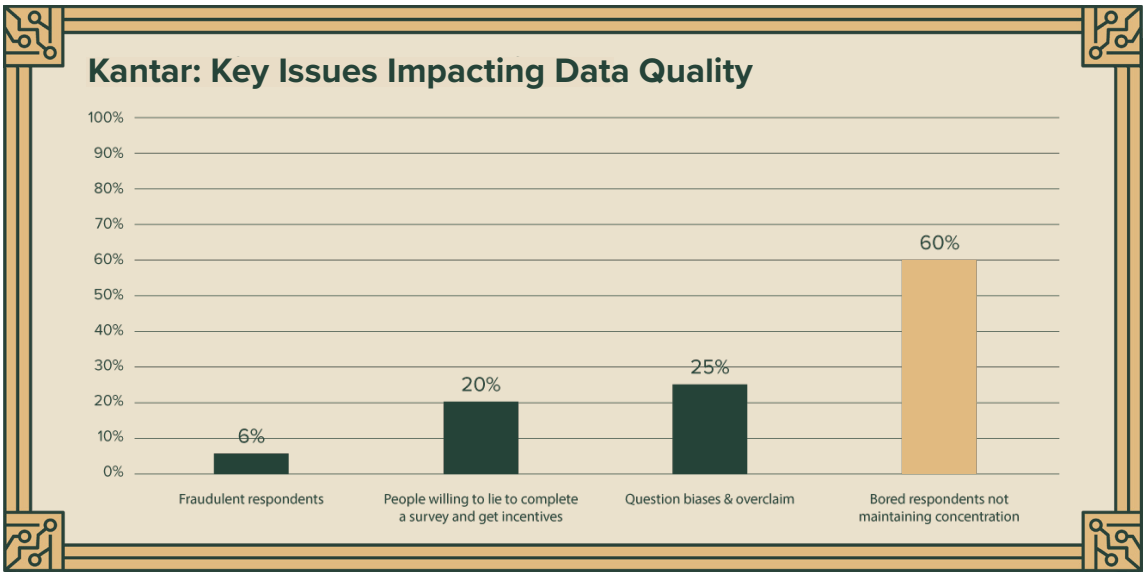
One problem: we own a TOTO toilet in Brooklyn. TOTO is an international brand with global distribution. The marketer overruled the machine...but the machine was right. The lesson isn’t about plumbing, it’s about human error.

“Traditional research suffers from some very human failures.”

People are the Unreliable Narrators

The uncomfortable truth is that people add a lot of noise, both as respondents and as reviewers. Marketers worry about AI hallucinations, but in practice, humans often hallucinate more.

Traditional research suffers from some very human failures. Real respondents get bored; they speed through items, click the same option down a column, and skip open-ended questions, so accuracy degrades before fieldwork even finishes. Incentives distort behavior; a noticeable share of panelists are there for rewards, not rigor, and many are outright fraudulent. And the questions themselves can tilt the table: clumsy wording nudges answers while brand-side wishful thinking inflates self-reported behavior. We’ve consolidated findings from Kantar’s research on the issues impacting data quality into a side-by-side chart for comparison: the biggest source of waste isn’t bots; it’s bored humans.



That's before the results are interpreted. In the readout, bias slips in: cherry-picking cuts, moving the goalposts, or narrating away inconvenient facts. Even the most seasoned researchers sometimes override clean readouts when results clash with priors or politics. The effect is the same: good data gets reshaped to fit a preferred story.

In short, the baseline error in legacy methods is already high, and that has nothing to do with AI.

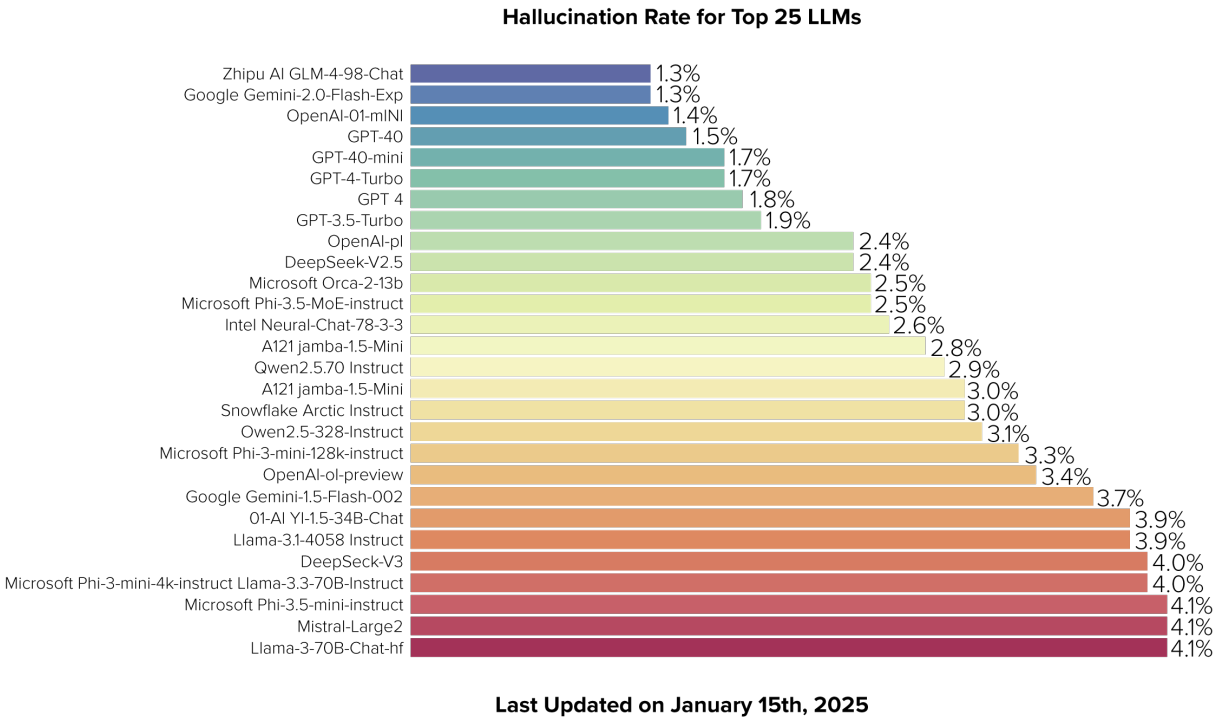
Synthetic methods aren't perfect either, but they have one decisive advantage: the accuracy is getting better and better, not worse and worse. You can pre-test a configuration, lock the exact model and settings, and rerun the same study on demand. That means the meeting debate can anchor to an evaluated, reproducible readout instead of memory.

** May 2023*

“Synthetic research methods aren’t perfect, but they have one decisive advantage: you can improve them.”

Reliability You Can Prove

On the machine side, the last two years of accuracy evaluations (“evals”) have pushed model hallucination rates into the low single digits for the top systems. An eval is a repeatable, standardized test that compares a model’s answers to ground-truth questions under controlled prompts and settings (think crash tests for models). If you scan the Vectara leaderboard, the picture becomes clear: a stack of sub-5% bars trending downward.



That progress comes from two forces working together: back-testing models against questions with ground-truth answers (bad configurations get tuned or discarded), and model-on-model critics that review outputs for leakage, bias, and contradictions (an automated peer-review before anything ships). Net effect: model error today sits well below the double-digit misremembering rates we routinely observe in humans. Most importantly, teams can now manage model error like any other operational risk: measure it, cap it, and rerun when needed.

We are not claiming perfection, and neither should defenders of purely human research. We are comparing imperfect to imperfect, and choosing the approach we can measure and reproduce.

Accuracy, Audited: A Reproducible Workflow

Accuracy isn't a vibe; it's a science-backed approach. At Evidenza, we use a simple, repeatable evaluation framework to assess and improve accuracy. In multiple client-side audits with brands like Dentsu, EY, and Salesforce, this same process has consistently landed in the high-80s for accuracy similarity against incumbent datasets.

This process starts by anchoring to a dataset you already trust, like a recent quant tracker or validated survey. In one engagement for a large telecom client, we treated 20 benchmark questions as ground truth.

This is then run against a matrix of models and settings. In this case study, we executed approximately ten runs per question across multiple providers and configurations, then plotted per-question correlations against the baseline. The heatmap below shows where agreement concentrates and where it doesn't. Yellow/green cells indicate highly correlated responses, and purple/blue cells highlight aberrant responses; overall, the models performed strongly across the board. Once we have this research as a benchmark, we can determine which models to use for which types of questions and "calibrate" for accuracy.

Because different systems excel at different item types, we select the best performer per question rather than anointing a single champion. Finally, we set a pass threshold and enforce it. Miss that number and we tighten the code, adjust the temperature, or swap models. If the number can't be improved, then that type of research routes to human fieldwork.

The result is not hand-waving about accuracy; it's a documented eval you can show Legal and Finance, complete with version-controlled code, models, and runs.

An eval tells you whether a model-and-prompt configuration clears a bar under controlled conditions. Hallucination governance is the day-to-day operating discipline that keeps it clearing the bar in production, so accuracy isn't a one-off test; it's a habit.

Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Lower error, higher confidence.** With evals, model hallucinations sit in the low single digits, below typical human misremembering rates. You're arguing less about if the data is real and more about what to do next.
- **Reproducible rigor.** Version-controlled prompts, models, and QC logs make the method auditable, something many legacy studies can't claim.
- **Finance alignment.** Accuracy reports act like ISO for insight, turning "Do we trust this?" into a checklist rather than a debate.

Putting Evidence to Work

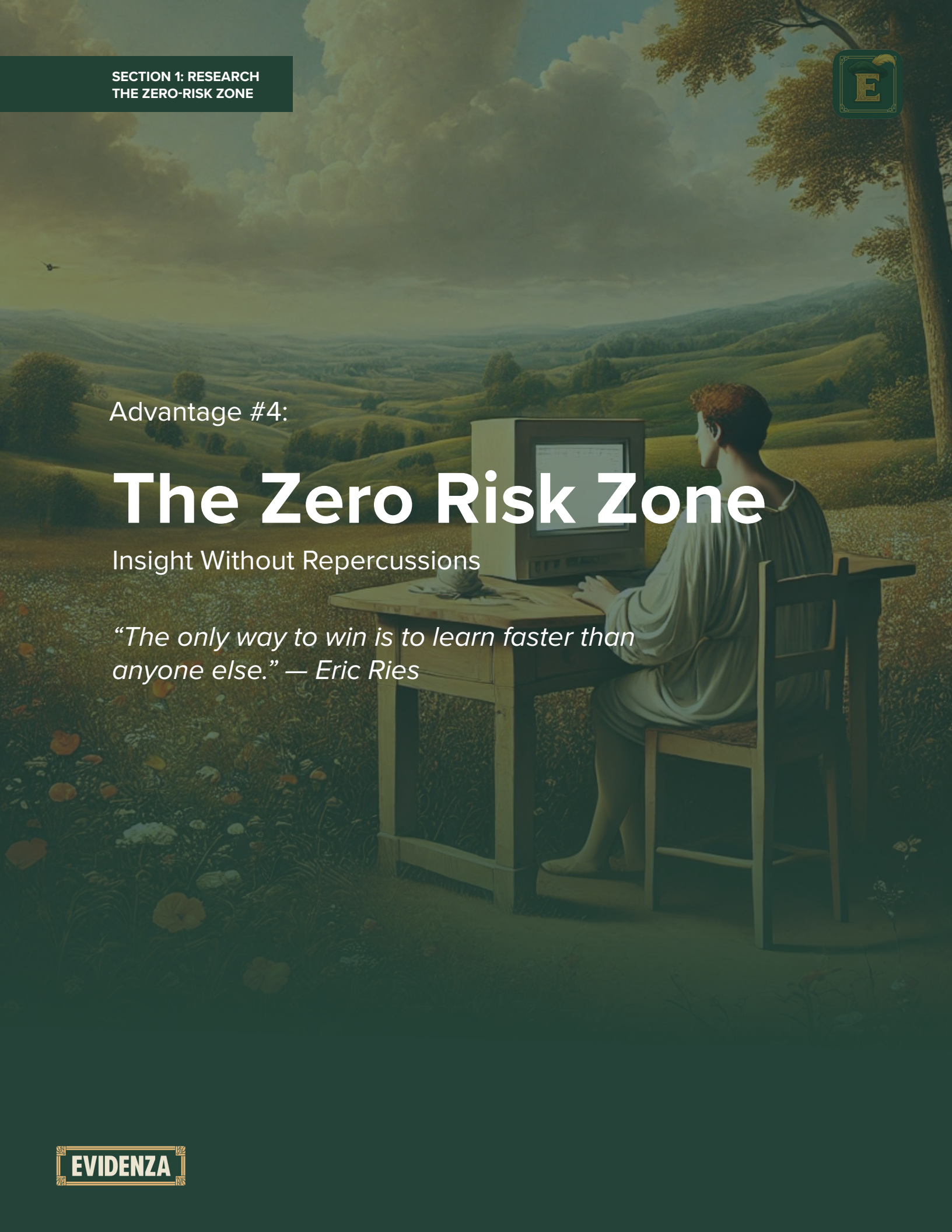
With synthetic research in the mix, "hallucination" stops being a fear and becomes a testable variable. Trust shifts from opinion to proof, moving the debate from "is this real?" to "what should we do?" It opens the door to bolder questions and better answers.

First Step

Stand up a lightweight eval harness. Take one trusted study, pick 15–20 questions as your baseline, then run three models × three temperatures × three prompts. Keep only the configurations that clear your chosen threshold (e.g., ~88% similarity). Use that short-list for your next synthetic quant study.

Bada Bing, Bada Boom

Accuracy stops being an argument and becomes a process. Approvals accelerate and the team that measures error best wins.



Advantage #4:

The Zero Risk Zone

Insight Without Repercussions

“The only way to win is to learn faster than anyone else.” — Eric Ries

Every marketer knows the feeling. You fight for months to win the budget, brief the agency, wait weeks for fieldwork—and then the big reveal flops. Wrong sample, weak insights, misaligned results. You don't just lose the money; you lose trust. Traditional research operates with three inherent risks—professional, legal, and reputational—that we call the Research-Ruin Triangle.

Consider the professional dimension. Imagine burning $300,000 and six months on a study that returns findings so obvious, your CEO asks if you used company funds to discover that water is wet. The consequence? Your credibility evaporates faster than your Q4 budget. In extreme cases, so does your job.

Then there's the legal minefield. Real humans mean real data—and real compliance nightmares. HIPAA violations, GDPR missteps, pharma's Sunshine Act reporting—each one a ticking time bomb. One mishandled piece of PII and you're not presenting insights; you're explaining to regulators why your "anonymous" survey included enough demographic data to identify half of suburban Minneapolis.

But the reputational risks? Those are the career-enders. Testing a stealth rebrand with live focus groups is like leaving confidential files on a public drive. One disgruntled participant, one screenshot, one tweet about your "embargoed" pricing strategy, and suddenly your share price tanks.

A Fortune 50 company wanted to rename itself—a decision so sensitive that even an internal leak could have rattled markets and morale. By running the exploration with synthetic customers, we helped them pressure-test naming, visual systems, and taglines in complete confidentiality, avoiding the media spotlight and employee rumor mill.

Framed for finance, synthetic work isn't just about chasing upside—it's about capping downside. A $30k synthetic study isn't just cheaper; it shrinks outcome variance. Because you can re-run studies on demand—asking deeper follow-ups, tightening ambiguous questions, or swapping in a better-fit sample—the risk of "wrong brief, wrong audience" collapses. You learn earlier if a message is fragile, pivot before media or engineering dollars accrue, and re-test the fix within 24 hours. In portfolio terms, you're improving expected value while clipping the left tail. That's why CFOs warm to it: fewer nasty surprises, faster salvage when they occur.

"Framed for finance, synthetic research isn't just about chasing upside—it's about capping downside."

Finance's lens on risk also differs materially from Marketing's. In a synthetic survey of 500 CFOs and 500 CMOs, 76% of CFOs preferred "safe & reliable" positioning while 54% of CMOs favored "bold & disruptive." Only 33% of CFOs felt it was the right time to take bigger risks versus 88% of CMOs; and when ranking "identifying and mitigating business risk," CFOs put it #1 while CMOs ranked it #6. That gap explains why brave ideas often stall in approvals. The Zero-Risk Zone closes it by translating creative exploration into downside-capped options, confidence bands, and an auditable trail both teams can back.

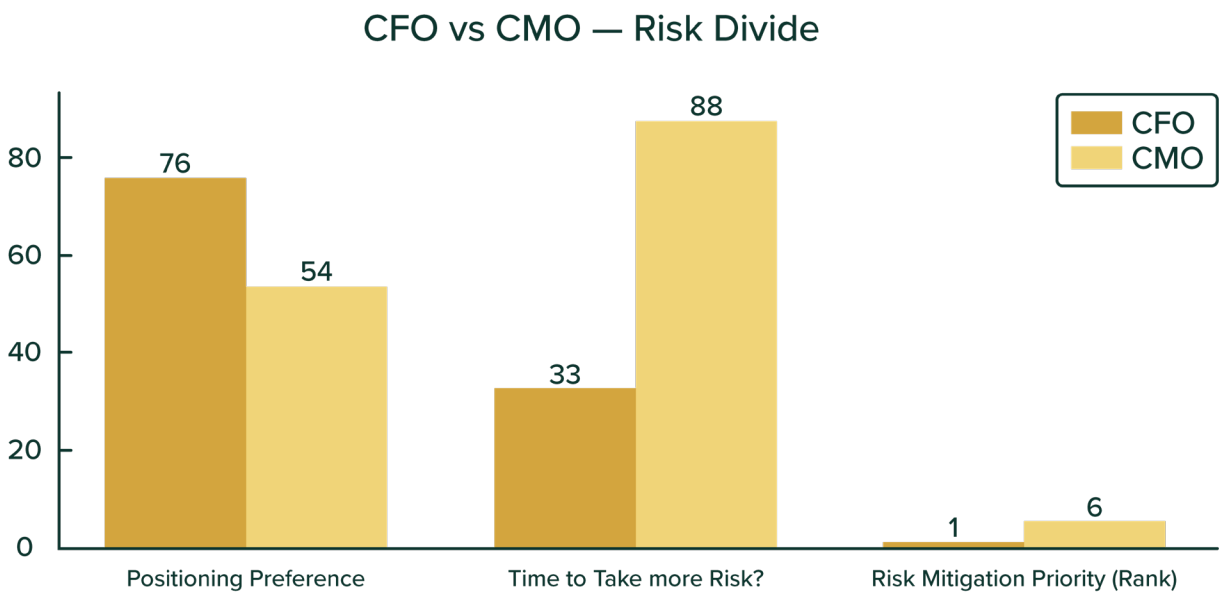


Figure: CFO vs CMO risk divide; in the third row, lower rank = higher priority.

Synthetic Research — The Risk Manager

Synthetic research gives you what traditional methods can't: a safe space to think out loud—because failure now costs thousands, not millions. Professional immunity rises first. In practice, a $30k synthetic study still matters to accounting, but first-round results land within 48 hours, and teams often build in two refinement spins—swapping messaging pillars or narrowing an ICP—so a shaky finding can solidify before leadership ever sees a slide.

Next comes compliance by design. AI respondents are data constructs, not data subjects, so pharma teams skip Sunshine-Act paperwork and EU marketers sidestep GDPR fines that can hit 4% of global revenue. We run safeguards such as frequency-based panel weighting, hallucination filters, and quarterly spot-audits to keep fidelity high.

Finally, a leak-proof workspace seals reputational cracks. Synthetic personas can't screenshot a stealth rebrand or tweet merger chatter; access-controlled workspaces mean only pre-approved users can view or edit test assets. That same shield contains spend risk: ideas pivot before media dollars or dev hours accrue.

Taken together, this compresses the risk surface area—replacing hundreds of unpredictable human respondents (PII and leak risk) with a single managed technology vendor, shrinking the attack surface Legal must police.

If you've ever pitched a budget, you know the scene—Finance balances risk reduction alongside ROI before releasing funds. Framed as a high-return, low-risk hedge, synthetic research turns gatekeepers into advocates. In other words, we're not selling creative disruption to Finance—we're selling risk insurance with upside.

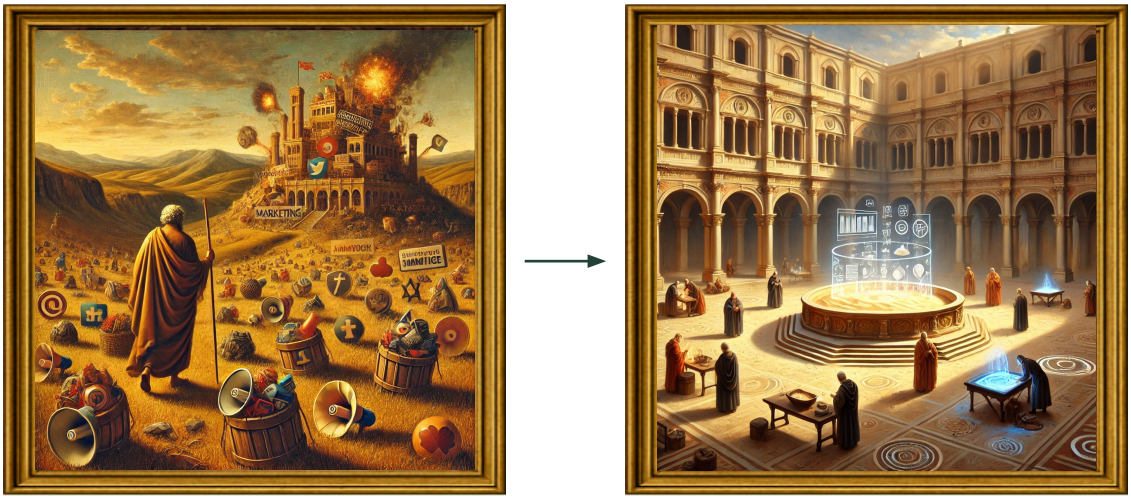
"When the financial, legal, and reputational stakes drop, teams feel free to ask bold, even provocative questions."

From Minefield to Sandbox

Synthetic research turns the minefield into a sandbox. Low-cost pilots prevent bad ideas from burning budgets, always-on panels detect sentiment shifts—flagging negative-sentiment spikes on Reddit before PR sees them—before they bloom into PR crises, and fast reruns recover lost ground in hours instead of months. Research ceases to be a slow, resource-heavy ordeal and becomes a flexible competitive advantage.

When the financial, legal, and reputational stakes drop, teams feel free to ask bold, even provocative questions—the kind that can unlock breakthrough value instead of incremental tweaks. Why? Because when failure costs thousands instead of millions, and when your “respondents” can’t leak your secrets, courage becomes affordable.

If you’re vetting novel clinical claims, running regulated safety studies, or testing highly local edge cases, you’ll still need real-world recruitment and compliance pathways. The pattern we see: use synthetic to converge quickly on the two or three contenders worth human fieldwork—then spend your scarce time and money where it actually changes the decision.



Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Strategic risk envelope.** Shrink the professional, legal, and reputational hazards of high-stakes exploration (stealth rebrands, pricing, M&A) so leadership can greenlight moves earlier.
- **Portfolio discipline.** Treat research as an options engine: generate and prune hypotheses efficiently, stage-gate with synthetic first, and reserve human fieldwork for finalists.
- **Bridge the CFO–CMO risk gap.** Translate creative exploration into downside-capped options, aligning with Finance's remit to identify and mitigate business risk.

Putting the Zero-Risk Zone to Work

Synthetic research transforms the minefield into a sandbox. When exploration carries materially reduced risk, experimentation becomes an everyday reflex instead of a once-a-year ordeal.

First Step

Choose a decision with asymmetric downside (rebrand, pricing change, earnings-call language). Use a synthetic panel to map downside scenarios first, then iterate toward options that cap risk while preserving upside.

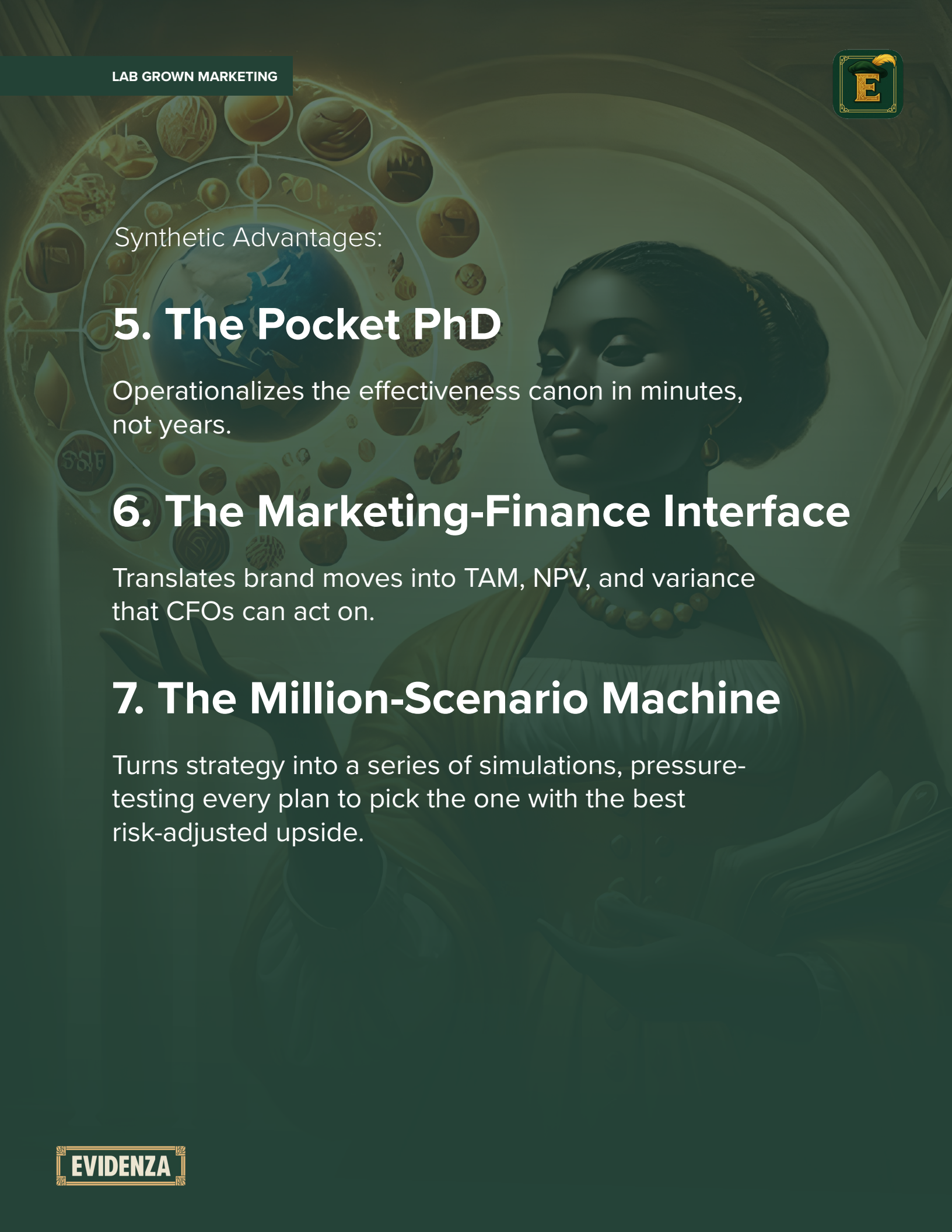
Bada Bing, Bada Boom

Insight without the downside. In the Zero-Risk Zone, the only gamble is sticking with guesswork.

Section 2:

Strategy

Strategy is deciding what to do and what not to do, a durable framework that guides execution. In a synthetic operating model, planning stops being a once-a-year bet and becomes a living simulation. Models ingest your history, spin thousands of futures, and express choices in the language of finance, so you pick portfolios for risk-adjusted upside, not slides for presentation flair.



Synthetic Advantages:

5. The Pocket PhD

Operationalizes the effectiveness canon in minutes, not years.

6. The Marketing-Finance Interface

Translates brand moves into TAM, NPV, and variance that CFOs can act on.

7. The Million-Scenario Machine

Turns strategy into a series of simulations, pressure-testing every plan to pick the one with the best risk-adjusted upside.

Advantage #5:

The Pocket PhD

World-Class Marketing Expertise on Demand

"Everyone has data. Few are evidence-based marketers." — Byron Sharp

Over the past two decades, marketing effectiveness has been quietly transformed.

We now have a clear, evidence-based understanding of how brands grow, thanks to the work of Ehrenberg-Bass, Binet & Field, and the countless essays of Mark Ritson. While this is arguably the most potent playbook in modern marketing, it remains buried in academic journals, technical white papers, and 500-page tomes. The revolution happened, but it was never televised, and most marketers never got the memo.

Even for those lucky enough to discover this canon, true mastery requires a significant time commitment, a luxury most marketing professionals lack amid quarterly planning, overlapping campaign calendars, and back-to-back product launches. When we were at LinkedIn's B2B Institute, it took five full years of study to internalize the laws of effectiveness, and we had the time, funding, and access most practitioners don't. Reading everything by Ehrenberg-Bass, Binet & Field, and Ritson would consume more than 500 hours of focused study (over three months of full-time effort) before you even begin applying the ideas.

"Only 17% of campaigns meet established effectiveness best-practice criteria."

Big Ideas, Tiny Adoption: The IPA DataBANK shows that only 17% of campaigns meet established effectiveness best-practice criteria (Binet & Field, 2020), proof that the revolution remains inaccessible to the vast majority of marketers.

Legendary marketing professor Jenny Romaniuk of the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute posed the question in MediaCat: Would anyone notice if AI made marketing decisions? Her experiment with 600 professionals revealed the sobering answer: when asked to pick the sales-winning ad from paired tests, marketers scored 52% accuracy, barely better than a coin toss. In other words, even seasoned teams struggle to turn theory into reliable choices.

Artificial intelligence changes this dynamic entirely. Imagine a PhD in your pocket, imbued with all marketing effectiveness knowledge. This “Pocket PhD” would behave like an always-on faculty member, an in-house professor. The Pocket PhD knows the canon (Ehrenberg-Bass, Binet & Field, Ritson), selects the right principle for your decision, and applies it in your context. Sometimes that is demand-state math (e.g., 95/5). At other times, it is brand asset management, ESOV guardrails, or Category Entry Point prioritization. The value is not one rule; it is all the rules, with explainable reasoning and ready-to-ship outputs that are customized to your brand and vertical. It is not just Byron Sharp in your pocket; it is Byron Sharp with your data, weighing in on every strategic decision.

In short, Pocket PhD maps the marketing effectiveness canon to your decision, explains the why, and outputs guardrailed recommendations you can ship.

“Artificial intelligence puts a PhD in your pocket, imbued with all knowledge of marketing effectiveness.”

“Artificial intelligence puts a PhD in your pocket, imbued with all knowledge of marketing effectiveness.”

From Years-Long Apprenticeship to 24-Hour Mastery: For B2B and B2C

Before AI, calculating an in-market vs. out-of-market (95-5 style) split meant commissioning research studies — surveys or panels that took weeks and cost tens of thousands of dollars. Today, you can run synthetic research with a simple heuristic and get results in hours — whether while sipping your morning cappuccino, between a quick pranzo and the next meeting, or winding down with a midnight amaro.

The heuristic is the 95-5 Rule, explained by John Dawes (2021): at any given time, only about 5% of buyers are actively in-market, while the other 95% are not. The rule for estimating the in-market percentage over a period is simple:

In-Market % = (Period Length ÷ Average Inter-Purchase Interval)

To estimate the interval, ask a straightforward survey question: “On average, how often does your organization purchase [category/product]?”

For example, if the average inter-purchase interval is five years (60 months), then in a one-year period (12 months) ≈ 20% of buyers are in-market (12 ÷ 60 = 20%). In a single quarter (3 months), ≈ 5% are in-market (3 ÷ 60 = 5%).

And even among buyers who are “in-market,” few are ready to buy immediately. Most progress through trigger, consideration, and evaluation phases — stages where category entry points (the cues that bring a brand to mind in buying situations) are critical. Building mental availability around these entry points ensures your brand is remembered not only when buyers are ready to purchase, but also when they first recognize the need.

The tables that follow are an illustrative synthetic 95/5 read for representative B2B and B2C categories. We fielded a synthetic quant survey to estimate inter-purchase intervals and then applied the 95/5 heuristic (Period ÷ Interval) to derive the “in-market” audience share for a quarter and for five years.

Example Module: Demand-state calibration (95/5) — B2B and B2C

B2B Snapshot:

Category	Typical Renewal Cycle	% In-Market This Quarter	% In-Market Over 5 Years
CRM	3 Years	~8%	~100%
Cybersecurity Platform	2 Years	~13%	~100%
Cloud Storage	4 Years	~6%	~100%
Medical Imaging Device	4 Years	~6%	~100%
ERP Suite	8 Years	~3%	~63%

B2C Snapshot:

Category	Typical Re-Purchase Cycle	% In-Market This Quarter	% In-Market Over 5 Years
Grocery Staples	Weekly	~100%	~100%
Quick-Serve Restaurants	Weekly	~100%	~100%
Mobile Data Plans (postpaid)	18 Months	~17%	~100%
Apparel & Footwear (basics/fast fashion)	5 months	~60%	~100%
Major Appliances	8 Years	~3%	~63%

Source: Synthetic quant survey (1,000 respondents per column) replicating Dawes' 95/5 method; identical approach used for B2B and B2C for apples-to-apples comparison. Method: quarterly in-market ≈ 3 months ÷ inter-purchase interval; 5-year ≈ 60 months ÷ interval (both capped at 100%).

How to read it: Fast-cycle B2C categories naturally have a larger slice of buyers "in market" at any moment, rewarding short windows, tight feedback loops, and heavier activation. Long-cycle B2B categories flip the math: tiny in-market slices per quarter make brand building and mental availability the main levers, with performance judged over longer horizons. Pocket PhD uses this split to set the right planning horizon, brand/activation mix, and success metrics for your category, so you don't chase a quarterly pipeline goal that the market structure can't deliver.

So what: In a quarter where only ~1% of ERP buyers are shopping, even flawless creative can capture only a sliver of demand. Instead, optimize for future cash flows (availability, reach, codes). In a weekly-cycle QSR category, a much larger in-market share makes short-term conversion realistic—optimize offers, cadence, and placements accordingly.

Pocket PhD runs a two-track plan: building brand memory for future buyers while orchestrating activation for those in-market, tuning the split to your category and moment.

Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Turn evidence into systems.** Move from “rules on a slide” to an evidence-first, finance-literate model that teams can run, not recite
- **Make plans CFO-legible.** Translate strategy into TAM/NPV/variance so budget debates become allocative, not philosophical.
- **Right rule, clear rationale.** The system picks the right law for the job and explains why with evidence, avoiding one-size-fits-all approaches and streamlining approvals.

Putting the Pocket PhD to Work

Synthetic expertise means you no longer need to choose between doing and studying marketing science. The playbook lives inside your context window.

First Step

Ask AI to calculate the 95-5 split for your core segment, then use the output to set realistic quarterly pipeline targets—and adjust your marketing strategy accordingly.

(Want a lighter start? Ask for a 200-word brief on which principles matter for your category right now—ESOV, CEPs, asset salience, distribution breadth, or 95/5—and share it at stand-up.)

Bada Bing, Bada Boom

Every marketer gets a PhD-level co-pilot. Ignorance isn’t an option when world-class strategists fit in your back pocket.

Advantage #6:

The Marketing-Finance Interface

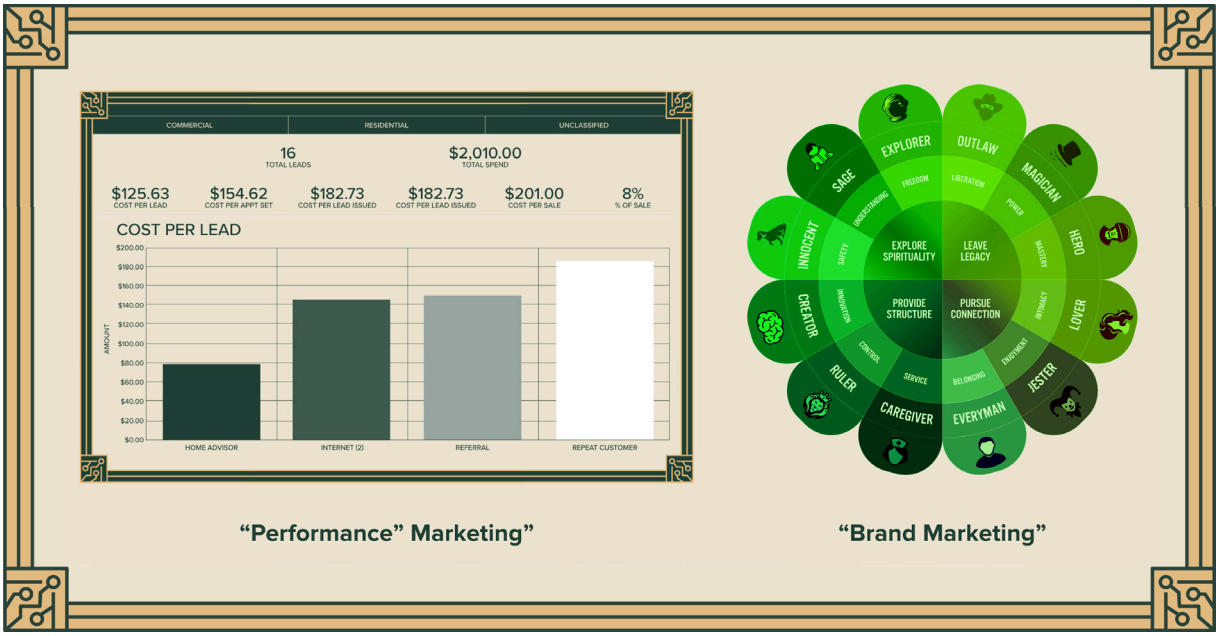
Fighting Finance with Finance

“Valuation is a bridge between stories and numbers.” — Aswath Damodaran

Over the past decade, everything has been financialized. Sneakers, watches, trading cards—each now has a live market ticker, and can be bought and sold like stocks. Inside companies, the same shift is unmistakable: CFOs have moved from back-office bean counters to CEOs-in-waiting.

But there is one function that has resisted financialization. A department that still runs on vibes more than valuations. A department called... brand marketing.

Performance marketers talk CAC, LTV, ROAS. Brand teams arrive with mood boards, manifesto copy, and so much semiotic jargon you'd need an MBA from Hogwarts just to translate it.



"Performance" Marketing" **"Brand Marketing"**

The result? Two camps end up having wildly different conversations with finance: performance teams optimize financial metrics like CAC and ROAS to the penny, while brand strategists debate tagline frameworks and archetypes in the clouds. Unsurprisingly, bottom-funnel marketers keep winning share of spend while long-term brand investment—despite its outsized impact —struggles to survive annual budget cuts.

“Until brand marketing speaks the language of finance, it won’t shape the business.”

That budgeting drift is ironic. Decades of effectiveness research show brand building delivers larger, more durable financial returns than short-cycle activation because it influences the 95% of buyers who are currently out of market but represent tomorrow’s cash flows. Boosting mental availability raises future revenue, lifts margins, and even lowers CAC by priming would-be buyers before performance marketers can swoop in. In portfolio terms, brand is the compound-interest engine, performance is the day-trading overlay.

And yet, brand Marketing has gotten less financial while the rest of the business has grown more so. We talk about engagement, affinity, awareness; finance talks about return on capital, EBIT, market share. As Rory Sutherland quips, “Asking a finance director to believe in brand iconography is like asking a hospital to believe in the healing power of crystals.” Until brand marketing speaks the language of finance, it won’t shape the business.

Brand’s payoff is notoriously hard to see on a CFO dashboard, so it gets dismissed as “soft.” The Marketing-Finance Interface is the bridge—a growing academic and practitioner discipline that links marketing inputs to financial outputs. In plain terms, it translates gains in mental availability, pricing power, and consideration into forecastable cash flows (TAM, revenue, NPV) and risk bands (variance), so brand choices can be compared to any other use of capital. Once you express a buying-situation lift as dollars over time, the smartest long-term bets look as compelling on paper as they are in practice—and budget debates become capital-allocation decisions.

This isn’t a crystal ball; it’s finance’s way of making uncertainty explicit. You’ll see assumptions and probability ranges—not single-point guesses—so marketing choices can be judged the same way CapEx is. It’s not a precise mathematical science, but neither is financial forecasting. As the saying goes, more fiction is written in Excel than in Word.

Historically, the marketing-finance interface only existed in arcane academic papers.

But with AI, every CMO and CFO will soon plug into a marketing-finance interface.

AI can link marketing to money.

The key thing to understand is that AI doesn't just collect primary research—it reads analyst reports, 10-Ks, and investor decks. It knows how big your category is, how fast it's growing, and where the dollars are flowing. It is financially fluent in the money math of your category.

As we discussed in the previous trend, AI gives you a PHD in your pocket. But it also gives you a CFO in your pocket. Now imagine fusing these two geniuses together...

What you get is a machine that can translate every marketing decision into a financial input and output. That means every segment, every message, every category-entry point can be sized not just in reach but in revenue potential. Marketing stops guessing; it starts capital allocating.

Lab-grown strategy flips the script. By merging synthetic research with synthetic finance analysis, marketers can express brand choices in hard currency, not hex codes.

Now, brand marketers can fight finance with finance.

From Art Board to Balance Sheet

Let us give you an example from our work.

At Evidenza, we run a Category Entry Points (CEP) survey to map the moments that trigger buying. Pocket PhD explains the results in clear, practical terms. We then append those CEPs to financial data (category size, prices, margins, penetration) and calculate the dollar value of each CEP so we can rank and prioritize. We do this with clients routinely—for a global alcohol brand, we analyzed coffee treating occasions in Italy (frequency, spend, volume) to reveal overlooked moments with a defined size of prize and projected gains that shaped strategy and creative execution.

Research Brief:

Component Overhaul (US Aviation MRO)

Objective: Estimate annual TAM for component-overhaul work; quantify brand mind-share in this buying situation; model revenue impact of a +1 ppt lift in mental availability.

Scope: United States; commercial aviation maintenance, repair & overhaul (MRO); component-overhaul buying situation only.

Data inputs: (1) Synthetic CEP survey (n≈1,000 qualified buyers), (2) public MRO financials & analyst reports, (3) client pricing/margin ranges (if available).

Method (summary): Fuse CEP incidence with category size to dollarize the situation; measure current mind-share; simulate +1 ppt lift; translate to revenue and variance bands.

Illustrative result: In ~90 minutes you might receive a table like this:

Buying Situation	Est. TAM (US)	Current Brand Mind-Share	Rev. Lift @ +1 ppt
Component Overhaul	$550 M	6%	**$33 M**
A-Check Contract	$210 M	4%	**$8 M**
Emergency AOG Fix	$120 M	2%	**$2 M**

Interpretation: Boosting top-of-mind presence by a single point in Component Overhaul is worth $33 M—an order of magnitude clearer than “let’s refresh our visual identity.”

In practical terms, the table operates as a marketing–finance interface, by translating brand effort into financial stakes. It's effectively saying, "Our mission in brand marketing is to ensure buyers think of us the moment a component overhaul need arises." Raise mental availability and revenue follows; lose it and the dollars flow to a rival. Seeing the dollar delta line-by-line reframes brand work from a stylistic exercise into a capital-allocation decision that CFOs and sales leaders can rally behind.

Instead of walking into a budget meeting debating campaign look-and-feel, a brand manager can now point to this table and say, "Investing to lift mind-share just one percentage point in this buying situation adds $33 M in annual revenue." That clarity arms the sales team as well: when a rep sits down to discuss an overhaul, the prospect already links your brand to the need, asks fewer questions, and moves faster through the funnel. Marketing sets the mental hook, sales reels it in, and finance sees exactly how the combined effort pays off.

"Every segment, every message, every category-entry point can be sized not just in reach but in revenue potential."

Where Synthetic Finance Adds Value

Synthetic finance delivers value along four fronts. Segment valuation puts a dollar amount on each persona or vertical before you craft a single message. Message ROI lets you pit two taglines head-to-head and see projected lifetime profit deltas, not just preference scores. Category-entry-point sizing attaches revenue stakes to the moments that flip buyers into market, so creative and media chase the richest triggers first. Finally, scenario testing models decisions such as a 5% price cut versus layering on a premium service, showing the EBIT impact alongside brand-equity shifts. To keep this credible, projections are benchmarked against analyst consensus and historical margin ranges, and exportable audit trails let finance re-run the model in Excel before sign-off.

Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Earn capital allocation credibility.** Frame brand choices in TAM/NPV/variance so funding moves from “soft” to approved
- **Prioritize what pays out.** Quantify high-value buying situations, rank CEPs by dollar impact across GTM, and tie mental availability to margin to defend premium.
- **Downside-governed portfolios.** Model risk and variance before any spend or build; fund the best risk-adjusted options, not aspirational bets.

Putting the Marketing-Finance Interface to Work

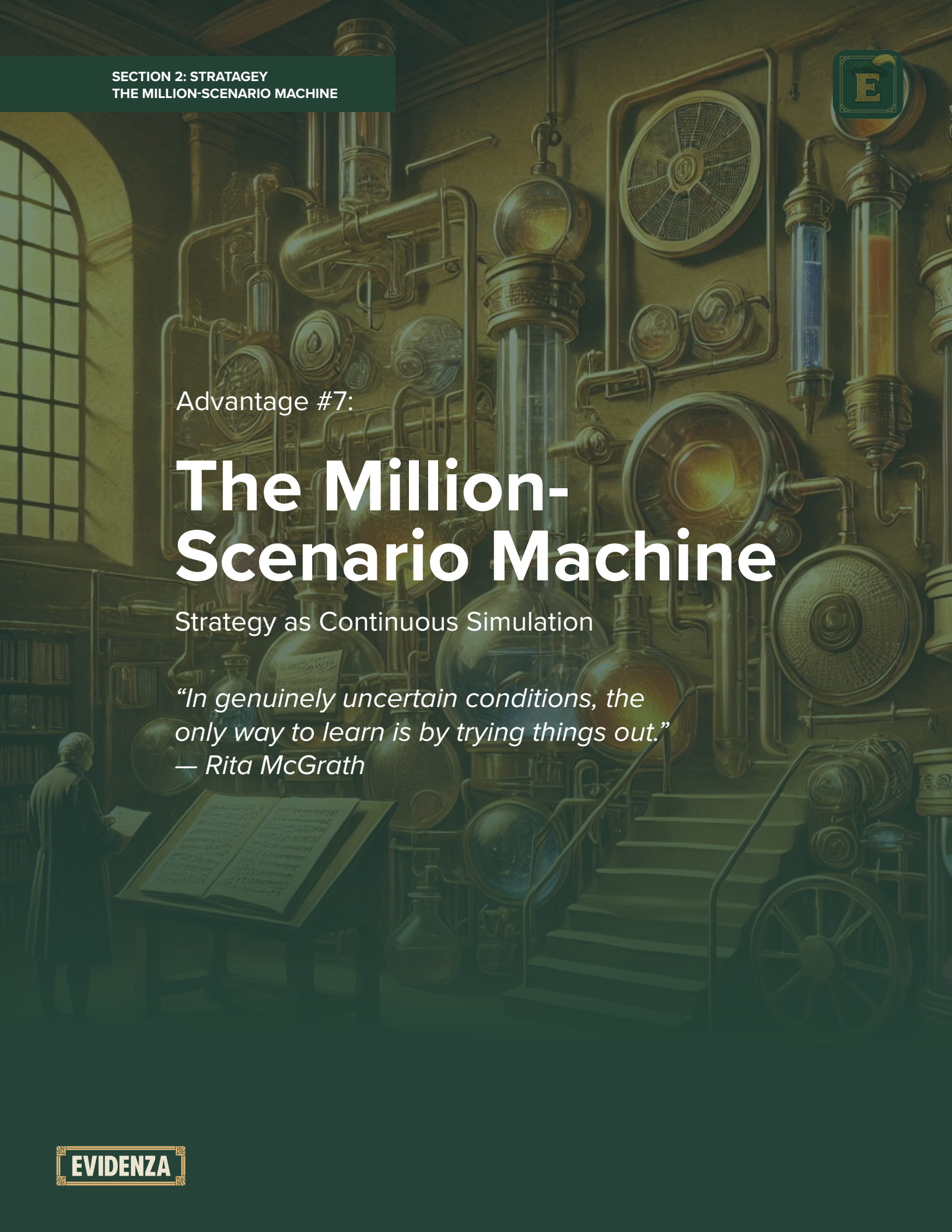
Synthetic finance lands best when it’s anchored to a real decision and a falsifiable question. Treat it like a mini investment memo—define the audience, the buying situation, the lever you’ll pull (message, price, distribution), and the dollar outcome you expect. Then let the model price the upside and downside before you spend a cent. It won’t be perfect, but neither are annual financial plans. The point is to surface assumptions and show probabilistic ranges, not single-point guesses—exactly how finance underwrites budgets.

First Step

Choose one upcoming brand investment—new tagline, refreshed visual ID, or sponsorship. Ask Pocket PhD to: 1) size the TAM of the most relevant buying situation, 2) estimate current mind-share, 3) model revenue gain from +1 ppt mental availability. Present the $ impact alongside the creative concept in your next budget review.
(Need a quick win? Run the same exercise on two campaign taglines and show which one delivers higher NPV per media dollar.)

Bada Bing, Bada Boom

Your brand plan now speaks in the language of the balance sheet. When creative meets currency, the marketing-finance divide disappears.



Advantage #7:

The Million-Scenario Machine

Strategy as Continuous Simulation

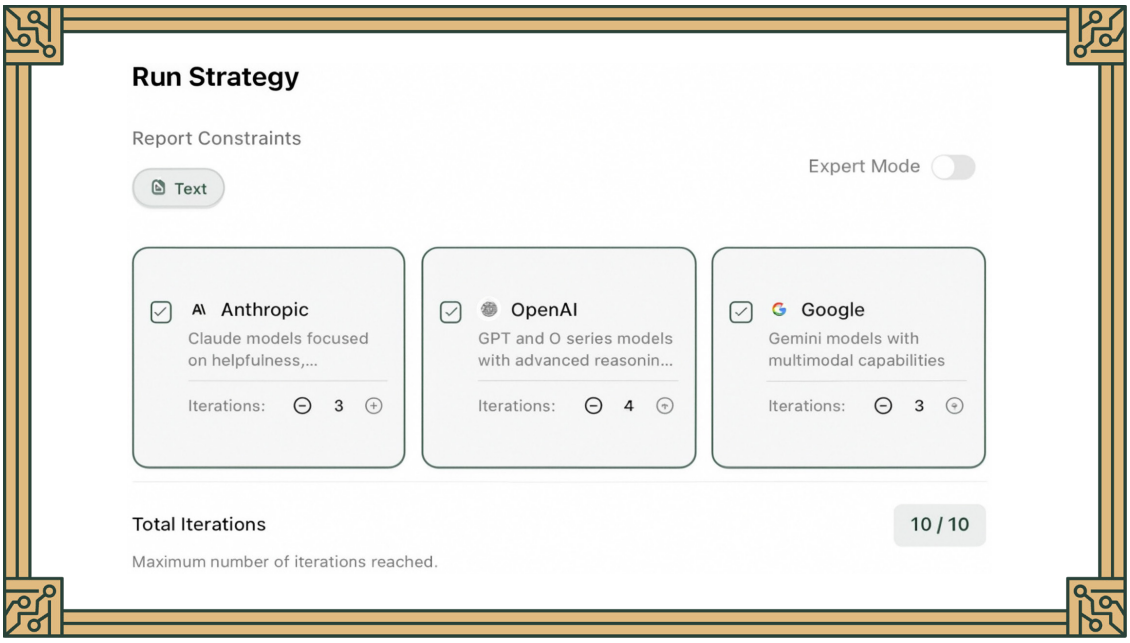
“In genuinely uncertain conditions, the only way to learn is by trying things out.”
— Rita McGrath

Banks use Monte Carlo to set value-at-risk, NASA uses it to land rovers on Mars, CERN uses it to probe particle collisions, and epidemiologists use it to forecast outbreaks. A Monte Carlo simulation runs thousands of what-ifs to reveal the full distribution of outcomes. Marketing faces the same problem: too many intertwined choices under uncertainty. But unlike bank executives, marketers could never afford Monte Carlo simulations. With AI, we can now simulate thousands (often millions) of futures in minutes and pick the plan with the best risk-adjusted upside.

Building a marketing strategy involves hundreds of intertwined decisions: who to target, how to position, what message to lead with, how much budget to assign, which channels to fund, and how to measure success. As Roger Martin writes in Playing to Win, strategy is an integrated set of choices. Yet most teams still work the old way: anchored to a single study and a single segmentation, guided by point forecasts and a static annual plan. No human can juggle every combination, let alone test them. Time and cost force marketers to narrow their thinking and make high-stakes bets with limited data. The result is a plan that sounds confident but is, at best, an educated guess.

“AI turns strategy into a living simulation.”

How Simulations Work



Large language models do not guess. Combined with Monte Carlo sweeps, ensemble modeling, and probability updating, AI turns strategy into a living simulation. Practically, that starts upstream with segmentation: instead of freezing one audience cut, we treat segmentation as a variable and sweep many plausible maps across multiple models (varying features, priors, cluster counts, assignment rules, and time windows) and score plans on each map.

Why Monte Carlo matters for marketers is simple: run the experiment 1,000 times and see which combination of factors wins across the full outcome range, not just at a single point. Historically, we based strategy on thin evidence: either nothing or a one-off study. Now every plan can rest on thousands of runs with confidence bands that finance trusts.

What we sweep:

- **Segmentations:** 1,000 audience maps with different features, cluster counts, and time windows.
- **Positionings:** 1,000 benefit and reason-to-believe variants.
- **Objectives and budget mixes:** 1,000 brand-activation splits, channels, price tiers, and pacing patterns. We score every plan on its expected five-year return (total net cash after costs) and on how much the result is likely to swing (risk). We agree on a simple minimum bar with finance and select the best return for the risk.

By blending tens of thousands of scenario runs, modelling "crowd wisdom," and rolling probability updates, these disciplines deliver far more signal. Together, they let the machine explore more futures, weight the smartest ones most heavily, and surface the path with the highest risk-adjusted upside. It does not just analyze the past; it simulates the future, running millions of variations across targeting, messaging, budgeting, positioning, media mix, and measurement.

The same engine that sized your in-market population now pressure-tests every spend mix in real time. In seconds, it can rank-order plans by upside and downside, surface the combinations least likely to blow up, and hand marketing, finance, and sales a shared roadmap.

"Model-backed planning outperforms single-point forecasts because it blends crowd-level judgment, risk visibility, and real-time learning into one loop."

From Blind Bets to 60-Minute Playbooks

Imagine feeding a single prompt into your strategy engine and, an hour later, opening a dashboard that shows which of 10,000 go-to-market plays will lift revenue without spiking risk. No month-long consultancy engagement, no five-figure retainer; just a large-scale simulation run that juggles every combination of audience slice, price tier, and brand-activation mix, then surfaces the two or three plans most likely to win.

Under the hood: Monte Carlo runs the scenarios; segmentation sweeps avoid single-cut bias; ensembles and probability updates keep forecasts current.

Model-backed planning outperforms single-point forecasts because it blends crowd-level judgment, risk visibility, and real-time learning into one loop. First, by assembling thousands of model perspectives, the system channels Tetlock-style super-forecasting, capturing the collective intelligence of many "experts" at GPU speed. Second, Monte Carlo sweeps reveal tail-risk plans that look great on median metrics but implode when CAC or churn spikes, letting finance nix hidden landmines early. Third, because each run is cheap, teams can re-simulate every month as pipeline actuals roll in, tightening assumptions the way quant desks tune models during earnings season.

Illustrative Output: Risk-Return Snapshot

In this GTM simulation, we asked the engine to vary three levers—segment focus, brand-activation mix, and price tier—across 10,000 scenarios for a mid-market CRM launch. The model ingests the last two years of CRM deal data plus current TAM estimates. Each simulation then outputs an expected five-year return and a risk score.

Instead of sifting through a dense spreadsheet, AI can bucket thousands of simulations into three intuitive zones:

- **Green Zone: High Upside, Low Risk.** Example: focus on IT Ops plus Dev Leads with a 55/45 brand-activation mix; expected five-year return ≈ $50 M with tight risk bands.
- **Yellow Zone: Promising but Choppy.** Example: CXO-only ABM shows $37 M upside, yet risk triples; finance may flag for caution.
- **Red Zone:** Looks Good on Paper, Blows Up Under Stress. Some full-ICP plays deliver $40 M median value but swing wildly when CAC or churn assumptions shift.

Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Probabilities over points.** Run many what-ifs with TAM, NPV, and variance allocated to each scenario, funding the option with the strongest upside-to-risk profile.
- **Iterative agility.** Re-simulate the mix as pipeline actuals roll in; stop waiting for quarterly reforecasts.
- **Catalyze aligned action.** Stop arguing channels and tune a shared, risk-adjusted mix the organization can execute.

Putting the Million-Scenario Machine to Work

Put simply, the million-scenario engine turns strategy from a one-off bet into a rolling portfolio exercise. When a full simulation costs pennies and runs in minutes, sticking with last quarter's assumptions is what gets expensive. Continuous data refreshes keep new scenarios compounding, so every week you wait leaves revenue on the table.

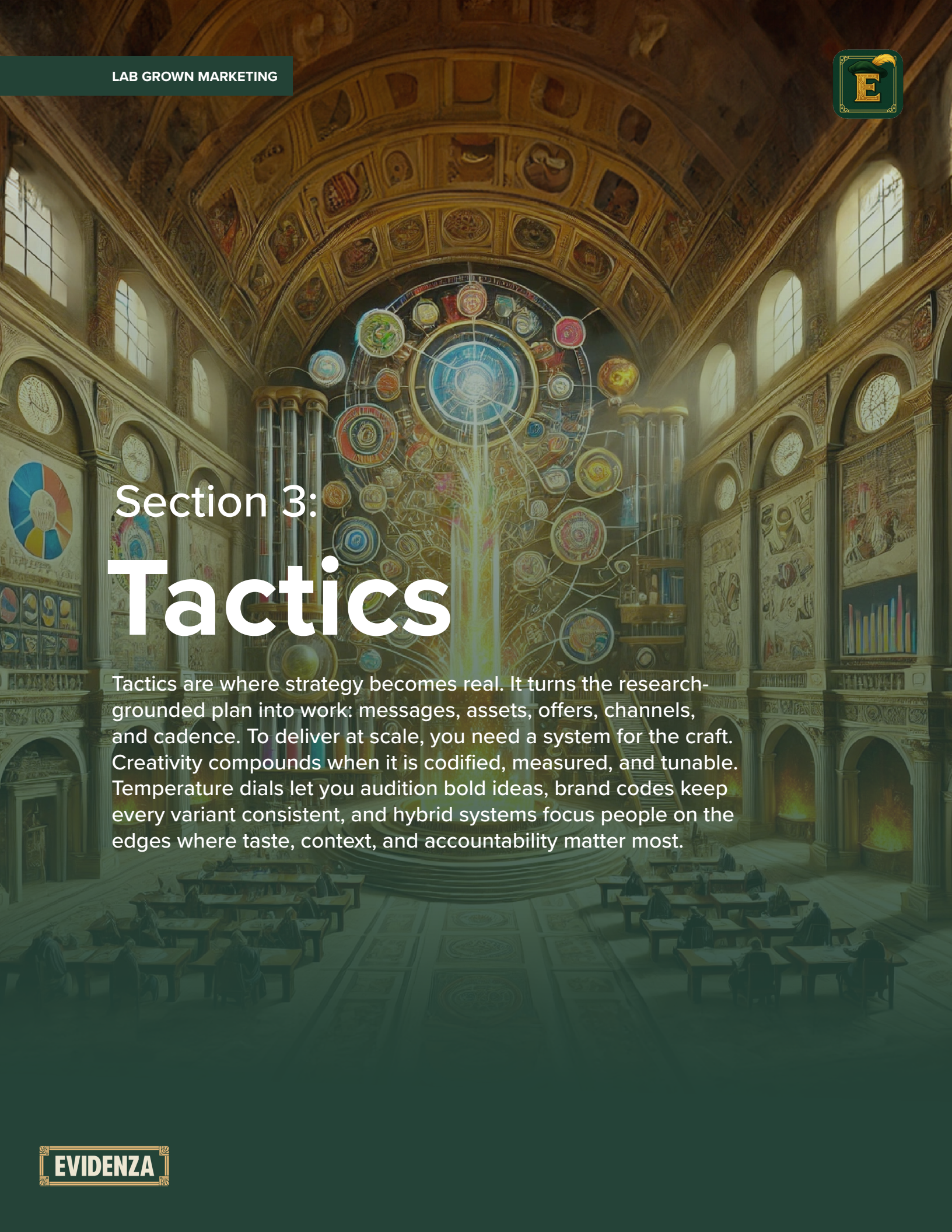
First Step

Hand the machine your last two years of campaign data, ask it to hunt the efficient frontier—1,000 spend mixes (enough to cover every realistic budget band) across three ICP tiers—while simultaneously sweeping ~1,000 segmentation maps across 10 models to test every plausible audience carve-up. You'll get the set of plans delivering ≥ 90 % of maximum expected return with ≤ 50 % of maximum risk.

(Want a lighter test? Simulate two creative concepts across three budget levels and see which combo outperforms on likelihood-adjusted ROI.)

Bada Bing, Bada Boom

Strategy stops being a once-a-year deck and becomes a living simulation. Marketers can test thousands of options before choosing one.



Section 3:

Tactics

Tactics are where strategy becomes real. It turns the research-grounded plan into work: messages, assets, offers, channels, and cadence. To deliver at scale, you need a system for the craft. Creativity compounds when it is codified, measured, and tunable. Temperature dials let you audition bold ideas, brand codes keep every variant consistent, and hybrid systems focus people on the edges where taste, context, and accountability matter most.

Synthetic Advantages:

8. The Innovation Game

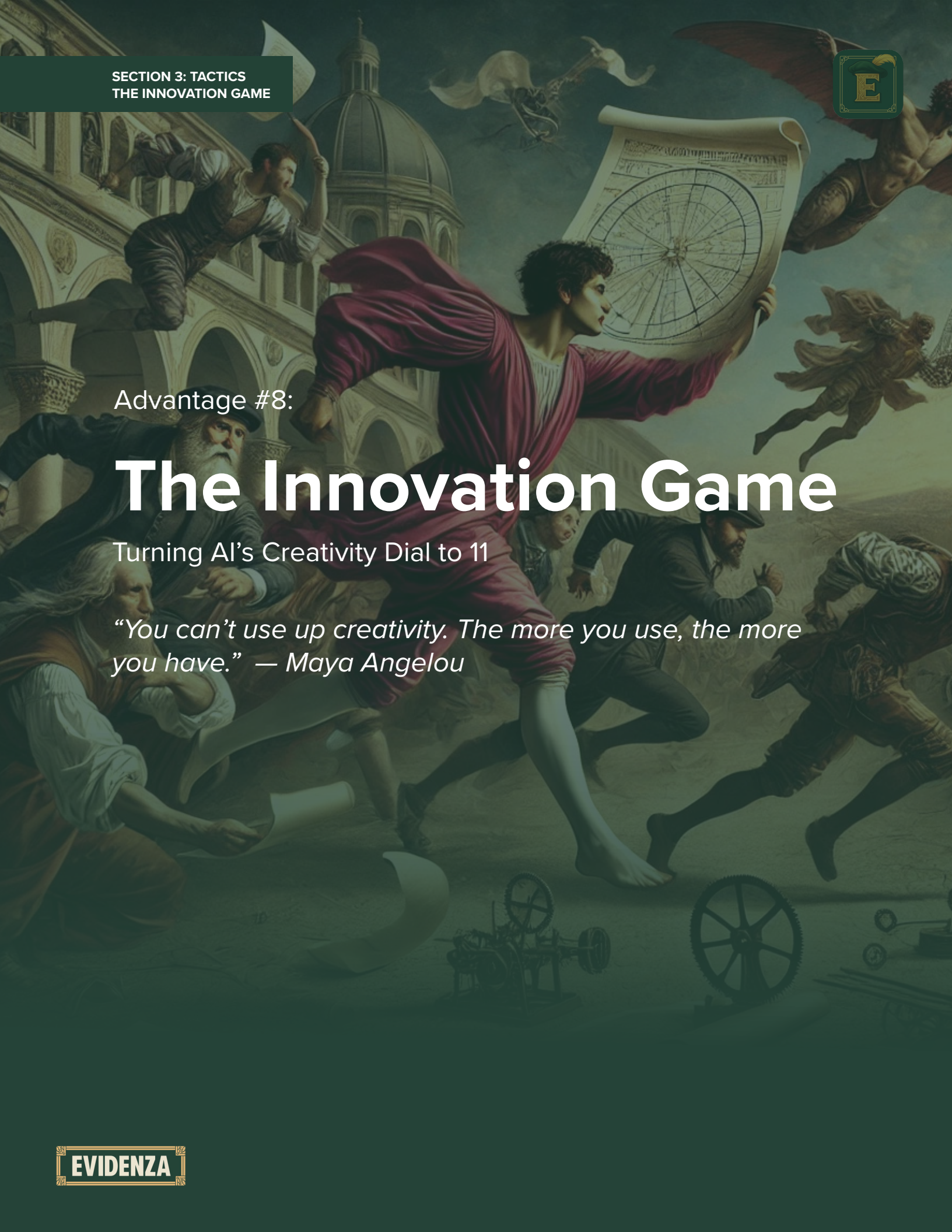
Uses temperature to range from safe polish to bold invention.

9. Codified Creativity

Measures Recognition × Attribution and enforces codes automatically.

10. Hybrid Intelligence

Lets models do the high-throughput middle; people make the calls that count.



Advantage #8:

The Innovation Game

Turning AI's Creativity Dial to 11

"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have." — Maya Angelou

In 2016, Google's AI program AlphaGo faced the world's top Go player, Lee Sedol, in a five-game match and shocked the world with "Move 37." Go is a 3,000-year-old board game played with black and white stones on a 19×19 grid; the goal is to surround territory. The rules are simple, yet the decision space is enormous, with more possible positions than atoms in the universe. In game two, Move 37 looked like a glitch to expert commentators, but it flipped the match and ultimately led to AlphaGo's victory. The move was not hand-coded; it emerged from the system exploring strategic possibilities no human would likely see. It did not copy the best players; it surpassed them. That is not imitation, it is innovation, and it hints at what AI can do for marketing: surface unconventional plays that look odd at first but quickly prove decisive when executed.

"AI can surface unconventional marketing plays that look odd at first but quickly prove decisive when executed."

Beyond Copy-Paste: How AI Generates the Unthinkable

It's all in the dial.

Every mainstream LLM exposes a parameter called temperature—literally the knob that controls how much randomness the model injects when it picks the next word. Temperature is basically the model's risk appetite. Set it low (≈ 0 – 0.3) and the system sticks to the most likely next words, giving you safe, on-brand copy. Turn it up (≈ 0.8 – 1.0 +) and the model roams the long tail of the probability curve, generating bolder, less predictable ideas. Consumer interfaces like ChatGPT rarely expose this knob directly; you'll usually need API access (read: an engineer) to set temperature precisely. But once you gain API control, you can treat temperature as a true creativity throttle. High temperatures unleash ideas that feel bold, weird, and sometimes brilliant—turning AI from an efficiency tool into a finely tunable engine of invention.

Under the hood, higher-temperature sampling increases the chance of selecting lower-probability next words from the model's distribution, which yields more varied continuations. Because large language models are trained across many domains (code, prose, scientific text), they can juxtapose patterns in novel ways, producing combinations that can feel cross-domain. Note that outputs are not learned in real time; unless you run an explicit feedback or fine-tuning loop, prompts and responses do not immediately update the model.

Aim that engine at the four Ps, and it behaves like a Move 37 factory. For product, it might suggest grafting a generative email coach directly into the CRM workflow—something no rival even specs. On price, it can surface a usage-cap-plus-revenue-share tier that finance has never modelled. For place, it might uncover a niche podcast where your ICP quietly congregates but ad inventory sits unsold. And in promotion, it riffs on competitor clichés instead of recycling them, delivering a headline human brainstorms would dismiss as too off-the-wall—right up until it wins the A/B test.

Marketing lives in a fast-moving, hard-to-pin-down environment. Temperature helps you explore more boldly and then converge on what works, so the process still feels instinct-led but is grounded in data. Here's how that dial plays across product, price, place, and promotion.

"AI temperature control helps you explore more boldly and then converge on what works, so the process still feels instinct-led but is grounded in data."

Illustration – The Temperature Dial Across the Four Ps

Product — What you sell

Low-temp (≈0.25): ProFlow Scheduler. A cloud dashboard ingests machine-sensor data and maintenance logs, then auto-schedules service windows when line demand is lowest. Unplanned downtime drops predictably by 2–3%.

High-temp (≈0.9): Phantom Twin. An AI "shadow factory" clones every production line, runs a million-cycle stress test overnight, and proposes counter-intuitive micro-shutdowns (e.g., "pause Line 3 for 11 minutes at 02:40 AM") that raise annual uptime 4–6%. Excess capacity is tokenized and traded on an internal "downtime futures" board—turning idle minutes into a sellable asset.

Price — What you charge

Low-temp: A standard good-better-best ladder with a modest uplift on Pro and a 10% annual-commit discount.

High-temp: A Win-When-We-Win tier—usage cap plus revenue share—backed by a simulator that previews margin bands by segment before launch. It lowers CAC risk for new accounts while scaling upside as customers grow.

Place — Where you sell

Low-temp: Add LinkedIn and Google Display, list in the partner marketplace, and expand field routes.

High-temp: Slip the product into workflows where your ICP already lives: a lightweight Slack app that turns DMs into CRM tasks, or a GitHub Action that auto-opens issues from support logs. Layer in a micro-sponsorship program across five niche podcasts with unsold inventory.

Promotion — How you sell it

Low-temp (0.2): "Meet InsightAssist—AI that logs your calls automatically."

High-temp (0.9): "Your CRM just grew a set of crystal balls. Say hello to InsightAssist." In head-to-head tests with a synthetic panel, the high-temp line grabs more attention and recall.

Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Distinctiveness moats.** Codified, non-obvious cues break category mimicry and compound mental availability.
- **Asymmetric opportunities.** One well-placed outlier can bend the results curve; the dial lets you hunt it deliberately.
- **Look before leaping.** Temperature plus brand/legal guardrails keep experimentation bold and compliant.
- **Institutional muscle memory.** Each run leaves behind prompts, patterns, and proofs that raise the creative baseline quarter after quarter.

Putting the Innovation Game to Work

Put simply, a high-temperature dial lets marketers audition audacious concepts at machine speed while a low-temperature pass polishes the winners. When your strategy engine can trial wild ideas in minutes, creativity stops being a gamble and becomes a repeatable edge.

First Step

“Generate five out-of-category analogies for your brand/offering at high temp (≈0.8), then rewrite the top two at low temp (≈0.3) for polish.” If your UI doesn’t expose temperature, run this via API (or your engineering partner) so you can set it precisely. ”Run the wild set through a quick synthetic focus group. Keep what sings, cut what stings. Sprinkle your deck with Move 37s the competition can’t copy—because they never saw the line.

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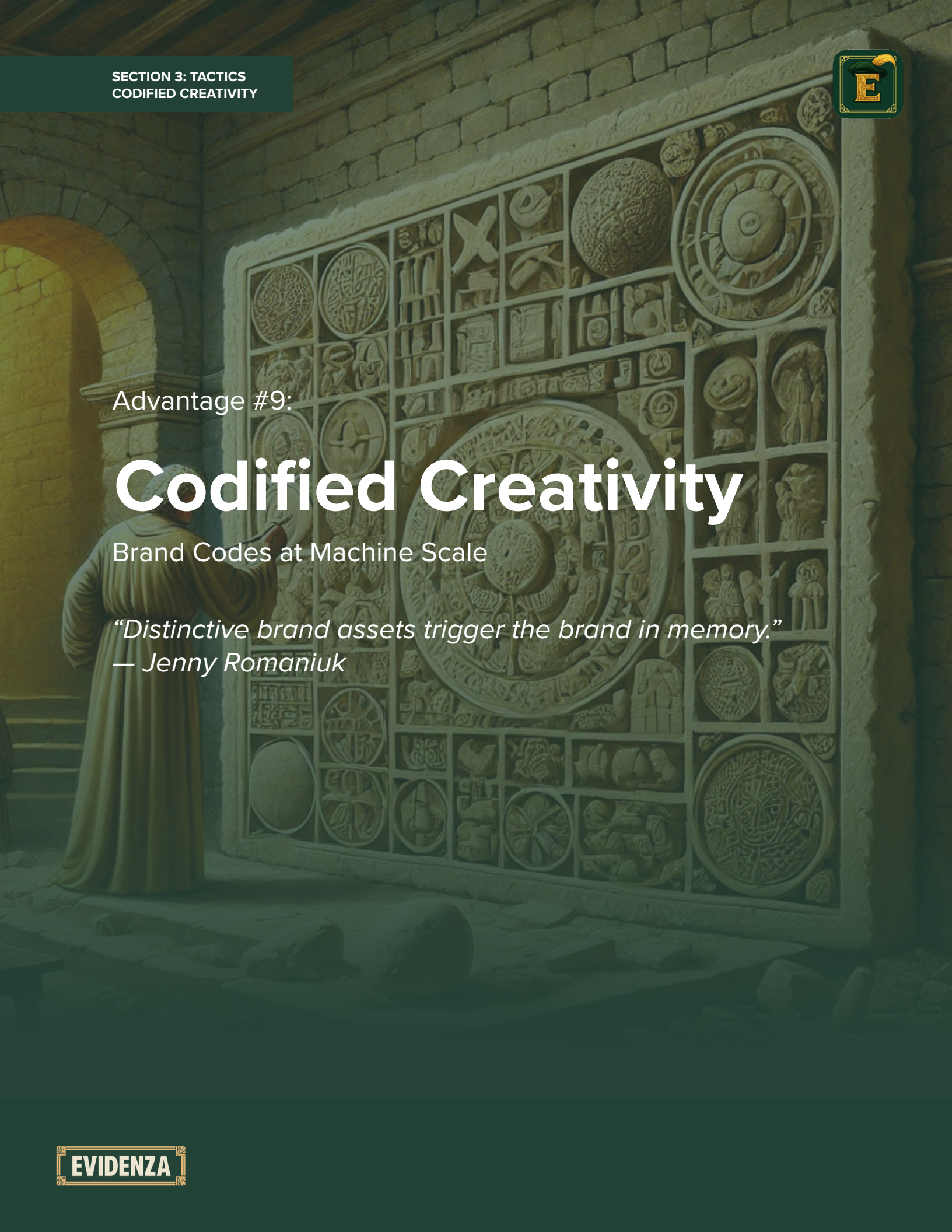
AI’s creativity dial turns “too crazy” into “category-defining.”



Advantage #9:

Codified Creativity

Brand Codes at Machine Scale

“Distinctive brand assets trigger the brand in memory.”
— Jenny Romaniuk

Marketing folklore says great ideas strike like lightning.

In reality, the best creators—from Pixar to Gucci to The Beatles—refine a formula, then play inside it. Great creative has a code, and great creators follow it.

Pixar doesn't wing it. Finding Nemo, WALL-E, and Inside Out all trace the same hero-lost-then-returns arc first etched in Homer's Odyssey—a 2,700-year-old blueprint that still pulls audiences in. Structure unlocks creativity; the tighter the framework, the bolder the execution feels.

When assets are optional, regions drift, agencies freelance, and campaigns fragment. Guidelines turn into décor—vague adjectives like "dynamic" or "modern" instead of repeatable rules. The result is creative drift. It isn't a lack of imagination; it's a lack of discipline.

This also wastes media. Distinctive cues act like shorthand in the brain, turning a half-second glance into instant recognition. Unbranded impressions credit the category or a rival; strong codes make sure you get credit for your work.

"Great creative has a code, and great creators follow it."

What the Code Is: Distinctive Brand Assets

Brands are no different from the great studios: they run on codes. Distinctive assets—colors, shapes, characters, sonic tags—are the practical building blocks of a code. Put the wrong brand name into a famous logo and people still identify the right company—that's **recognition** and **attribution** doing their job.

How It Works

Large-language and vision models are pattern-recognition engines. Point them at a brand's historical output and they can extract the DNA that makes the work recognizable—and score each element for recognition and attribution. Then they can propose counter-positioned codes the category ignores, and finally execute at scale within guardrails.

The table below is an illustrative synthetic distinctive-asset test for Oracle. We ran a blinded recognition/attribution read on three cues—its red wordmark style, the color red, and founder Larry Ellison—and ranked them by Recognition and Attribution so you can see which assets to amplify, nurture, watch out, or explore using the grid logic above.

Example • Oracle logo audit

Asset	Recognition	Attribution
Red Wordmark Style	37 %	7 %
Color Red	47 %	14 %
Larry Ellison (founder)	72 %	78 %

Readout: characters beat colors, and colors are hard to own. Ellison scores high on both recognition and attribution; the red wordmark and the color red do not (red is common in tech, so linkage stays low).

Action: put Ellison front and center; keep red as a support code; tighten wordmark use to high-impact placements only. Until assets clear a ~60/60 recognition/attribution threshold, treat them as secondary.

“Brand codes aren’t just design guidelines—they are intangible assets that compound every time they fire in memory.”

From Readout to Playbook. Use a table like the above to set priorities, then go through the following steps to convert codes into cash.

Counter-coding (create daylight from the category). Before you double down on any cue, have AI scan current category creative to spot overused colors, shapes, and photo styles. Then deliberately choose cues your rivals avoid and validate they spike on Attribution in testing. Lock winners into simple rules so every execution stays unmistakably yours. Counter-coded cues typically climb the Recognition × Attribution map faster because they face less category noise.

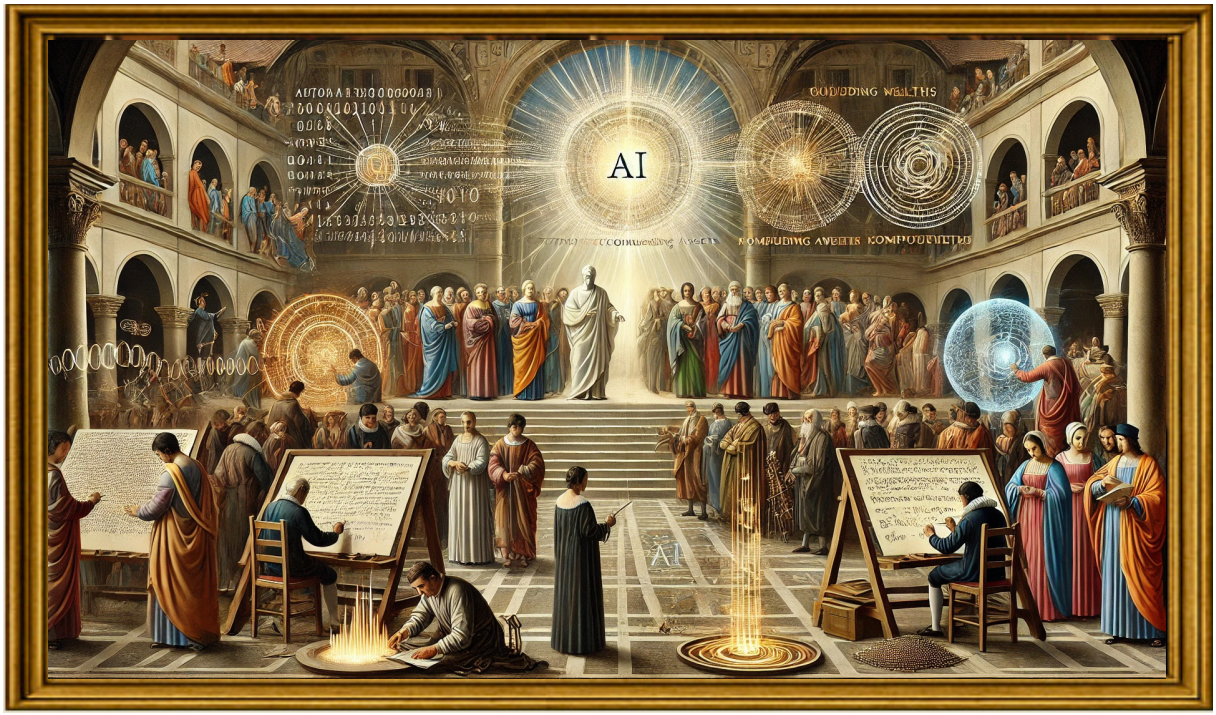
Execute and enforce. AI doesn’t stop at diagnosis; it enforces the prescription. Once the system knows the approved palette, typeface, and character set, every variant it generates stays on code and off-code layouts are blocked automatically. In practice, that means pre-flight checks that block off-code layouts, asset libraries that serve only approved files, and on-export validators that flag missing cues (logo, color, character) before anything ships. Governance becomes automatic—fewer late-night “brand-police” threads, more on-brand work out the door.

Scale without drift. Ask for 1,000 ad concepts, each remixing headline, visual, and CTA, and the model produces them in minutes, all within guardrails. Teams can A/B test the set overnight, keep the winners, kill the rest, and repeat. Consistency stops being a bottleneck and becomes a multiplier: every on-code impression reinforces memory, which compounds share of mind, which compounds cash flow.

AI turns codes into compounding assets. Brand codes aren’t just design guidelines—they are intangible assets that compound every time they fire in memory. Using the same Recognition × Attribution matrix, AI helps set baselines and prioritize which assets are likely to move the needle. It is a planning tool, not a meter. Teams validate movement with brand tracking or other market measurement.

We treat Recognition and Attribution as planning KPIs: simulate likely uplift, set quarterly targets, and pre-define tests. For finance, we translate scenarios into expected reach and recall gains with revenue sensitivities (for example, if 300 K more buyers recognize us on sight and 1 % convert at a $1 K ACV, that implies roughly $3 M). Because they face less category noise, counter-coded cues are expected to climb the map faster, which is why we prioritize them in the plan.

In B2B, where too many ads go effectively unbranded, an unlinked impression is free advertising for the category and a gift to whichever competitor has stronger codes. Better codes turn that leak into a flywheel—every accurately branded impression reinforces the next, compounding share of mind and, ultimately, cash flow.



Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Transform recall into cash.** On-code repetition turns consistency into memory and memory into demand, enabling finance to see KPIs alongside creative.
- **Reusable, IP portfolios.** Master codes scale across thousands of variants, shifting effort from one-offs to repeatable plays with unmistakable branding.
- **On-code governance by default.** Define, test, enforce, and scale distinctive creative with compliance and measurable impact, turning constraints into accelerants.

Putting Codified Creativity to Work

Put simply, lab-grown creative turns every logo, shade, and mascot into memory equity. When an always-on model keeps every asset on code, continuity becomes automatic and every accurately branded impression nudges revenue uphill.

First Step

Run a counter-code scan of your category to spot the cues everyone shares, then prototype three alternatives designed to create daylight. Pick your three most valuable assets—logo, signature color, founder photo—and feed 200 recent ads, decks, and social posts into the model. Let it surface what's truly distinctive, generate 100 on-code variants, then test the top five with a quick synthetic read.

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The brand police just became an always-on growth engine.

Advantage #10:

Hybrid Intelligence

Humans at the Edges, Machines in the Middle

“The most important use of a tool as powerful as AI is to augment humanity, not to replace it.” — Fei-Fei Li

The old cliche in B2B marketing was “It’s not B2B, it’s H2H (human to human).”

The new cliche is “AI + Humans is always better than AI alone.”

It’s tidy, reassuring—and often wrong. In domains where accuracy is king, there are plenty of cases where the machine matches or surpasses the human, and sometimes the human introduces new errors by second-guessing correct outputs. The point isn’t that people don’t matter. It’s where people matter that has changed.

Consider medicine, where the stakes are high and the outcomes are objectively measurable. A recent MIT-Harvard study, summarized in The New York Times, ran chest X-ray diagnosis trials across three cohorts. Physicians working unaided scored about 74% accuracy; physicians using AI improved to ~76%. AI operating on its own reached ~92%. In short, the human-in-the-loop sometimes reduced performance by second-guessing correct model outputs. The takeaway isn’t “ban doctors,” it’s “be precise about where humans add the most value and where they negatively impact results.”

Marketing is a perfect test bed for this idea, because it mixes two kinds of work. Some tasks are structured, repeatable, and verifiable. Others are ambiguous, political, and taste-driven. Add humans to the first type, and you slow it down; remove humans from the second, and you lose critical judgment. The right answer isn’t “always together.” In the era of hybrid intelligence, humans excel at the edges, while AI models power the middle at scale.

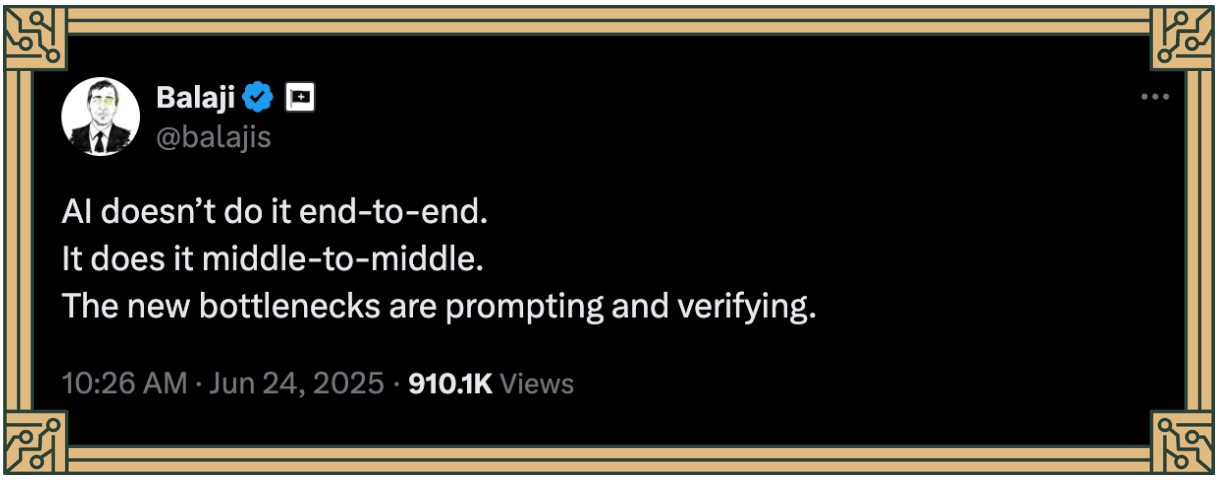
“The point isn’t that people don’t matter. It’s where people matter that has changed.”

Where People Shine (and Where They Don't)

Humans still win at four things that matter: context, taste, narrative, and accountability. They read the internal politics, the sales reality, and the timing constraints a model can't see; they know when a technically correct answer will land wrong in the market—and how to redirect without neutering it; they can sequence facts into a story other executives will believe and act on; and they own the risk—signing the memo and living with the consequences.

But we lose time in the trenches by refusing to let go of the tasks we mistake for "craft"—hand-coding 1,000 open ends. Re-flowing slides, rewriting the same subject lines, and running the same pivot tables—again. These middle-band tasks are where humans insert fatigue, inconsistency, and ego. Bottom line—let the robot do the slog so you can do the calls that count.

Middle-to-Middle, Not End-to-End



AI excels at the middle—high-throughput, verifiable tasks. Marketers belong at the beginning and the end: Prompt & Plan at the front edge; Verify & Decide at the back edge. The "middle-to-middle" framing keeps humans out of the bottleneck and puts them where they add the most value.

“In the era of hybrid intelligence, humans excel at the edges, while AI models power the middle at scale.”

Reimagining the Hybrid Intelligence Workflow

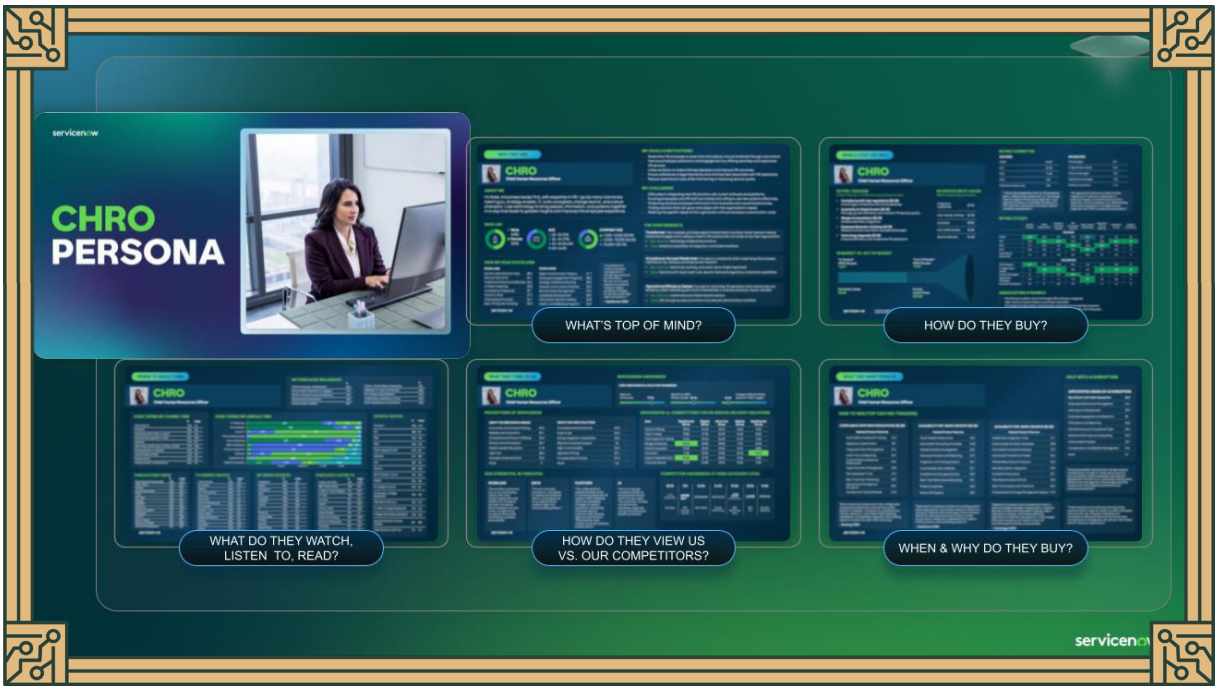
Think of the workflow as three lanes. First comes Prompt & Plan. Make the guardrails tangible: capture them in a one-page brief (objective, scope, constraints), an eval checklist (what “good” looks like), and a risk-threshold table. Those artifacts lock the intent so the model can work without mid-stream opinions.

With the edges locked, the model owns the Middle. It drafts surveys and scenarios, fields synthetic respondents, codes open-ends, and clusters themes. It then assembles the first deck and chart pack. In strategy mode it runs simulations; in creative it generates on-code variants; in ops it reconciles sources and fills tables. Instrument this band with simple SLAs—time-to-first-draft, pass-rate on evals, variance limits—so you measure throughput and quality without inserting people into the pipe.

Finally comes Verify & Decide. Brand, legal, and finance judge fitness for purpose and choose the trade-offs. Verification isn’t only manual: chain models so one generates and another critiques, one projects and another stress-tests. Treat them as evaluators that check for leakage, bias, hallucination, and statistical oddities, then export a QC log so the humans can make the final call fast.

Call it the Hybrid Marketing Workflow: front-load intent, back-load decision-making, let the model carry the heavy middle. The outcome isn’t just speed; it’s reliability, because the moments where human bias creeps in are fenced in by artifacts and audits rather than meetings.

Edge-In, Edge-Out in Practice: ServiceNow



Personas are one-page snapshots of buyers: role, goals, pains, triggers, and decision criteria. They're important because they align marketing, sales, and product on the same customer, convert research into clear guidance for messaging and channels, and serve as the front-edge brief that lets the model work autonomously in the middle.

When we ran a persona-card sprint for ServiceNow, marketing and sales set the edges: target role (e.g., CHRO), success criteria, must-have info, and approvers. Our model handled the middle: it fused internal notes with public signals, drafted the card (buying triggers, stages, committee view, in- vs. out-of-market), generated first-pass talk tracks, and built a shareable deck. Humans returned to verify: product and sales edited for realism, brand/legal ran pre-flight checks, and leadership signed. What took weeks now clears in a single loop—clear edges, automated middle.

Why It Matters for Marketers

- **Systematizing bottlenecks..** Name and instrument the true choke points so you can train for them, measure them, and improve them quarter over quarter, concentrating human talent where it will have the biggest impact.
- **Operational resilience.** The middle can scale up or down without new headcount; the edges scale via playbooks and short training, not org bloat.
- **Reallocate budget to growth activities.** Savings from the automated middle fund reach and R&D rather than slide work.

Putting Hybrid Intelligence to Work

Put simply, jobs are bundles of tasks. Don't ask "Will AI replace marketers?" Ask "Which tasks should the model own, and when should a human intervene?" Once you see the work as edges and middle, you can redesign the factory.

First Step

Pick one workflow—say, a messaging test or a creative sprint—and map it to Prompt → Process → Verify. Write a tight human brief (objectives, constraints, success metrics). Hand the middle to the model (generation, testing, analysis). Then bring humans back only to judge fitness for purpose and sign. Instrument the loop so the system learns which prompts, models, and checks correlate with outcomes.

Bada Bing, Bada Boom

you stop debating whether humans "beat" AI and start building a system where each does what it does best—the machine handles the grind; you make the calls that matter.

Lab-Grown Marketing

Key Takeaways

“Evidence beats opinion. Speed beats ceremony. Synthesis beats silos.”

EVIDENZA

Use this as your operating checklist for the next 12 months. If a takeaway isn't visible in next quarter's plan, fix the plan. Each point distills patterns that recur across the ten trends—so you can run one system, not ten disconnected tactics.

1. **Seat the customer in every meeting.** On-call synthetic customers replace proxies and make every decision answerable to a real buyer's needs.

2. **Ask bolder questions, safely.** When exploration costs thousands instead of millions, teams ask bolder questions. Synthetic respondents remove the Research-Ruin Triangle (professional, legal, reputational). Outcome: more experiments, earlier pivots, fewer career-risking flops.

3. **Measure error, then cap it.** Treat accuracy as an operating discipline: run evals, document configs, and handle hallucinations like any other risk with controls and reruns.

4. **Plan in the language of finance.** Link choices to money: score options on expected return and risk so budget talks move from opinions to trade-offs.

5. **Turn marketing science into muscle memory.** The canon exists (Ehrenberg-Bass; Binet & Field; Ritson); AI operationalizes it so plans start from proven priors, not vibes.

6. **Run on two tracks: brand + activation.** Build brand memory for future buyers while orchestrating activation for those in market; use 95/5 to set horizons and metrics.

7. **Simulate strategy continuously.** Use Monte Carlo sweeps and model ensembles to test thousands of plans and pick the mix with the best return for the risk; re-simulate as reality updates.

8. **Turn the creativity dial.** Temperature gives you a controllable range—from low-risk polish to high-variance invention. Explore hot, then cool for brand/legal polish.

9. **Codify and enforce brand codes.** Define, test, and enforce distinctive assets so more impressions credit to you, not the category.

10. **Put humans at the edges, machines in the middle.** People set intent and make the calls that count; models do the high-throughput, variance-prone middle work.

Evidenza's Future: The 10-Minute Marketing Plan

By leveraging synthetic data and sophisticated AI-powered workflows, diagnosis, strategy, and execution can be compressed into a single 10-minute loop that delivers a launch-ready package: a concise brief, a recommended plan, on-brand assets, and an auditable handoff. This is the future-state that Evidenza is actively building.

- **Minute 0–1:** Define the decision. Type one high-leverage question (new segment, message, pricing tier). Auto-capture objectives, constraints, success metrics, and guardrails into a one-page brief.
- **Minute 1–3:** Diagnose the market (95/5 + CEP). Run synthetic baselines for inter-purchase cycles and in-market ratios. Suggest 8–12 category-entry points (CEPs), size each with TAM × CEP, and surface the top 3 by expected impact.
- **Minute 3–5:** Simulate the strategy. Sweep thousands of scenarios across segmentation, positioning, objectives, and spend mix. Output the top three plans with expected five-year return and risk, plus an efficient-frontier view that shows near-optimal options.
- **Minute 5–7:** Codify the brand and generate on-code creative. Audit distinctive assets via a Recognition × Attribution map. Propose counter-coded cues the category underuses. Generate 50 on-code variants (high temperature for exploration, low for polish). Use a quick synthetic panel to select the top five.
- **Minute 7–9:** Governance and finance snapshot. Run pre-flight checks, version assets, and export a QC log. Produce a one-page finance view that links the plan to money—expected return, risk, budget bands, reach floors—and a clean handoff doc for Sales and Media.
- **Minute 9–10:** Human review and launch. Hold an edge-only sign-off with Brand, Finance, and Sales. Publish the assets and spend mix. Schedule monthly re-simulation, quarterly Recognition × Attribution tracking, and a rolling CEP backlog.

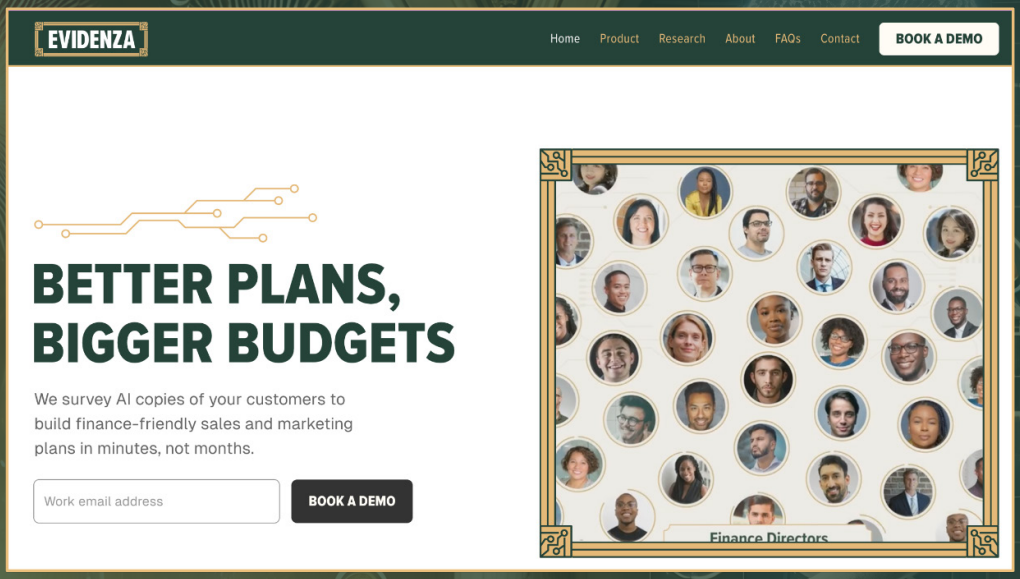
What ships at T+10 minutes:

- **One-page decision brief**
- **Strategy snapshot**
- **On-code creative pack**
- **Finance view**
- **QC log and governance checklist**

Why it works:

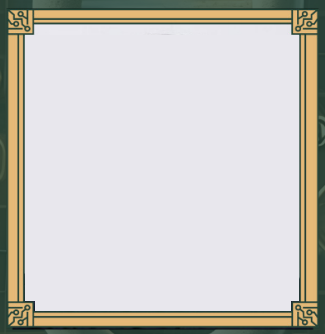
- **Speed.** One loop for diagnosis, strategy, and execution.
- **Consistency.** Decisions rest on common models rather than opinions.
- **Human at the edges.** People set intent and make the call; models carry the middle.
- **One source of truth.** Version-controlled studies, assets, and sims.

Welcome to the Synthetic Century. Pilot with Evidenza to turn your Lab-Grown Marketing plan into a competitive advantage.



Jon Lombardo

Peter Weinberg



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