



adThrive

Creativity & Data

An AdThrive Insights Series



Creativity matters

"Either you innovate or you're in commodity hell. If you do what everybody else does, you have a low-margin business."

– Sam Palmisano, Late CEO of IBM

Companies that fully integrate creativity and data enjoy growth rates **twice as high** as companies that don't¹

Creativity was identified as the **"most crucial factor for future success"** by 1,500 CEOs from 60 countries, and across 33 industries²

Creativity is the **second-most in-demand skill** in the world after cloud computing³

82% of companies believe there is a strong connection between creativity and business results

8 in 10 people feel that unlocking creativity is critical to economic growth⁵

66% of people feel creativity is valuable to society⁵

Creativity without data is a leap in the dark

"Creativity will always be our superpower. But data is our compass."

- Kimberlee Wells, CEO, TBWA/Australia

Creativity without data is a hunch

- > Data fuels your creative innovation
- > Data helps sharpen and perfect your gut instinct
- > Data helps you direct and prioritize your creative efforts
- > Data boosts creativity to drive greater success against your business goals

Data without creativity leads to lifeless numbers on a page

- > Creativity allows you to be more agile with your data
- > Creativity helps you tap into something viral from the data
- > Creativity provides the human lens to translate the data into a meaningful connection with the reader
- > Creativity helps find an engaging story from the numbers



Empowering you to be more agile

Creativity is a muscle you can and should exercise

Creative problem-solving sessions with **people that have even a small amount of creativity training came up with 350% as many ideas** compared to groups without any training and these ideas were determined to be 415% more original.¹

75% of people think they are not living up to their creative potential²

When you learn how to leverage both creativity and data to more easily produce on-demand ideas, you're more flexible in unexpected circumstances. It enables you to pivot quickly and future-proof your business.

It can help you be more agile, adaptable, and innovative in situations like:

- Current events (e.g. coronavirus)
- Producing fresh ideas for holiday content
- Overcoming the summer slump
- When you feel you're out of ideas for a certain series of content

Fusing creativity and data

"Clear problem statements can unlock the energy and innovation that lies within ... your organization... The lack of a clear problem formulation can prevent innovation and lead to wasted time and money."

- Nelson Repenning, Don Kieffer, and Todd Astor, for the MIT Sloan Management Review, March 2017

Identify the objective

The most effective way to fuse data and creativity is to focus on outcomes and objectives first. Determine your goal:

- > Be as clear as possible
- > Make sure it's measurable

Then go digging

Using your goal to frame your search, seek out the data and insights that are related. This will help focus your time and prevent you from wasting efforts on random pieces of data or ideas.

Some methods for combining them:

- > A/B testing creative concepts
- > Getting data into a creative state
- > Making creative decisions about the data possibilities



The Creative Process

Developed by James Webb Young

One way to approach creative challenges is by following the five-step process of creative ideation.

STEP 1: Preparation

Gather all the data and read everything you can about the subject matter.

STEP 2: Immersion and brainstorm

Write out all your ideas, working over all the various data points and materials in your mind.

STEP 3: Incubation

Step away from the problem and stop thinking about it. Do something unrelated.

STEP 4: Insight

The aha or eureka moment where an idea comes to you.

STEP 5: Evaluation

Test your ideas and adjust and/or repeat the process based on the feedback.



Use your data to tell a story

- **Find the most compelling story**
Make sure the story has a hook, momentum, or a captivating purpose. Use the creative process to identify potential content topics.
- **Identify your audience**
Who is your audience? What are their passions, their challenges? What does the audience know about the topic? Keep them in mind as you put your story together – it should always tie back to their interests and/or the benefits to them.
- **Compile your data**
With your topic and audience in mind, identify what data you have and what is missing. Make sure to vet your sources.
- **Filter your findings**
Ask yourself if your data and findings tie back to the original narrative, support the story, and will be of interest to your audience.
- **Craft your narrative**
Write out your story using your data, audience, and creative mind. Leverage your keyword research and SEO tactics to set your content up for performance and success.
- **Feedback/measurement**
How are you going to measure success? Can you get feedback from your audience? Look at performance – time on page, pageviews, etc.

Module Exercises:

1.

Evaluate both your use of creativity and data in the day to day operations of your business.

Determine how you're doing for the questions below on a scale of 1 (worst) to 10 (best)

How much are you using data to make decisions?

How well are you using creativity to come up with solutions?

2.

Following the example from the video, brainstorm new ideas for camping or the great outdoors this summer that tie into your site's niche (e.g., food, home, education, etc.) if possible.

List 5 of them.



Module Exercises:

3.

Can you think of any content you've created where you've used data to tell your story? List an example.

4.

Think about your own **creative process**. Do you have a method you follow to produce your ideas?

An Overview of AdThrive's Data & Creativity Series



Data and creativity tools and techniques
that we'll be covering in this series:

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- > Google Trends
 - > Keyword research
 - > Industry data and research
 - > Social trends and insights
 - > Creative hacking
 - > Creative resources



Thank you

Questions, comments, feedback?
Reach out to support@adthrive.com