Dior's holiday ad faces questions over AI

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Dior's animated holiday film is drawing both praise for its craftsmanship and questions about whether AI helped create it. The film, directed by Sylvain Chomet and described by Dior as a "hand-drawn homage to Monsieur Dior's beloved dog, Bobby", initially impressed LinkedIn members with its nostalgic style. But some members have pointed to visual inconsistencies as evidence of possible AI use. Those allegations however remain unverified. The scrutiny comes as Prada, Levi's and e.l.f. showcase traditional animation and puppetry, with members arguing that visible human effort is becoming a selling point in advertising increasingly filled with AI imagery. Studios are also reporting rising demand for handmade advertising, as backlash against AI use builds.

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Prada called its Christmas campaign "Animated By Hand". Christian Dior Couture called its own "a new animated short film". That difference turned into a controversy.

Earlier this week Prada released "Drawing Prada: Animated By Hand", with characters drawn frame by frame by former Disney animator John Pomeroy. The process was the message.

Two days later Dior answered with a film by Sylvain Chomet, the director of The Triplets of Belleville, narrated by Robert Pattinson, with Rihanna voicing a star. Dior's own posts never said "hand-drawn"; the press said it for them.

It took less than a day for animators to start pausing the film and posting stills on X, one of them pointing to a hand with six fingers. A single tweet, "Dior uses AI. It's giving cheap and fake", went past 10,000 likes. Then Cartoon Brew, the site the animation industry actually reads, took "hand-drawn" out of its headline: "it appears that AI was used on the production of this ad". From Dior, silence (up until this moment, at least):

My take: whether they used AI or not, the ambiguity is the real problem. Next to a brand that writes "by hand" in the title, vague reads as hiding. And when people stop trusting what you show them, your P&L feels it soon after. Being crystal clear would have been the bold move.

What's your take on this?

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Tudor Morari
2h

Everyone's roasting Dior's new AI animation ad, and they've got a point. Just not the one most people think.

This winter, luxury went all in on handmade. Prada brought in an ex-Disney animator. Porsche had every single frame painted by hand in oil. Then Dior dropped a 7-minute film by Sylvain Chomet and sold it as handcrafted.

Then people hit pause.

A bee's arm going straight through its own body. A face that changes between shots. Hands that melt into each other. Letters that bend into nonsense.

I've been making AI animation every day for 3 years, so here's my take. I don't think it was fully AI. I think the key poses were drawn by hand, and AI filled in the frames in between. That's exactly why it looks beautiful standing still and falls apart the second it moves.

And this is the part brands keep missing. People don't hate AI, they're selective about it.

→ AI to clean up bad audio? Nobody cares.
→ AI to upscale old footage? Totally fine.
→ AI on the exact craft you're bragging about, then calling it hand-drawn? That's when people feel lied to.

AI isn't the problem. Hiding it is.

Used right, it makes animation faster, cheaper and better. Hidden, it costs you the one thing you can't regenerate: trust.

Save this for the next time someone tells you something is 100% handmade 👀

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Aleksandr Maksimov
2h

AI's going to destroy your brand.

By using AI, you risk putting your brand's reputation on the line if people "find out" that you're actually using AI to create assets shared with your audience.

At least, that's what most people would think.

Recently, DIOR launched a campaign that was clearly created with the help of AI. The extent of AI's involvement is still questionable, but you can clearly see it in some of the individual frames.

In reality, AI wasn't the reason everyone's raging about this ad. It was the creative direction, the reasoning behind it, and the way this asset was used that caused the problem.

A brand that's famous for its "handcrafted" products tried to push this ad as a "handcrafted" animation, leaving people with absolutely no reason not to dump on it once they noticed it was made with AI.

Brands are trying to save costs by using AI INSTEAD of creatives, while completely missing out on AI's strongest power: empowering actual creatives and allowing them to be even more creative.

But to achieve that, you need actual creatives in charge of the creative direction of projects like this.

At New Limit Labs, we've always stood for using AI creatively. Having a whole team of traditional creatives who know how to use AI at its best allows us to show up with more and better creative assets, while still putting OUR reputation on the quality of the output.

It's not about whether AI was used or not. Great films can be shot on a greenscreen instead of actual locations.

It's about how, why, and when your team should use AI.

And it takes ball knowledge to figure this out correctly.

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Nicole Jasmine Scott
3h

I started writing a post about nostalgia marketing.

This Christmas, brands are bringing back animation styles I grew up loving. Hand-drawn illustrations. Claymation. Felt animals. Stop-motion.

And I am LOVING it.

The whimsy! The nostalgia! The HOURS of creative work.

I was ready to write about Christmas magic.

But apparently, the internet had other plans.

While I was admiring Prada's adorable animals, e.l.f.'s claymation, Strathberry's felt Christmas world and Barbour bringing back Wallace & Gromit, my FYP filled with questions about Dior's Christmas campaign.

Wait. Was its beautiful animation actually made using generative AI?

One post led to another. Suddenly, I was reading articles and analysing animation frames.

So here I am, playing Nancy Drew AGAIN.

All I wanted was a little Christmas magic. Somehow, I ended up investigating Dior's fingers.

But let me start where I meant to.

Growing up as an agnostic Jew in Canada, I LOVED Christmas. The decorations. The coziness. I desperately wanted a tree.

Honestly, GREAT marketing.

And all the Christmas specials! Especially the cartoons. I was OBSESSED.

The Snowman, A Charlie Brown Christmas, Rudolph, The Forgotten Toys. Even questionable YTV gems like Christopher the Christmas Tree.

But my favourite was The Nutcracker Prince. The animation was BEAUTIFUL.

Seeing those styles return? I LOVE it. Especially PRADA.

Its Drawing Prada: Animated by Hand campaign, created with former Disney animator John Pomeroy, brought fashion and adorable hand-drawn animals together.

There's a term for part of this: effort signalling. The time, skill and human work become part of the appeal.

Having studied art history and fashion design, I LOVE that. The textures. The imperfections.

But then Dior said, "Hold my Christmas ornament."

Its film, directed by Sylvain Chomet of The Triplets of Belleville and narrated by Robert Pattinson (yes, I have a crush, moving on), was praised for its artistry.

Then came the questions. Extra fingers. Strange movements. Odd lettering.

Cartoon Brew even removed "hand-drawn" from its headline amid questions about the production.

Some details DO look AI-generated to me. But that isn't proof. If AI was involved, I'd want transparency.

I'm not anti-generative AI. Even this post began as my messy writing, with AI helping me edit it.

Last year, for a school project, I had to make a YouTube ad. Storyboarding overwhelmed me. I could see it in my head, but drawing the angles and lighting? I kept getting them wrong.

AI helped me prototype ideas. But a prototype isn't a finished campaign.

For that, I'd want CREATIVES : artists, animators, designers, cinematographers and actors bringing ideas I couldn't imagine alone.

AI can help me visualise an idea. People can make it better.

So are we appreciating human creativity more, or are brands getting better at selling the LOOK of it?

#CreativeStrategy #LuxuryMarketing #GenerativeAI #BrandTrust

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Jessica Connolly
4h · Edited

Two luxury brands, two nostalgic Christmas ads echoing the golden age of hand-drawn animation. Dior (left) and Prada (right).

Except it seems that only one of them was actually hand-drawn. The Dior ad is facing accusations of using generative AI. But on first watch of both ads you probably wouldn't know, so what's the problem? The brands wanted to create a warm and fuzzy Christmas feeling, and they've done that, right?

If you go to the comments of Dior's ad, you'll see people praising the effort and artistry of traditional animation - unaware of the AI accusations. People aren't just won over by the visuals themselves, they're won over by the idea of human effort, which will increasingly be associated with luxury and craftsmanship.

I've said for a while that we're heading towards a world where AI art is your chlorine-washed, plastic-packed cheap and cheerful fast food, while human art will become the equivalent of organic, local-grown produce. Maybe both have their place, but in terms of branding, you need to figure out if you're the Rustlers 1-minute microwave burger, or a Michelin starred meal.

And you certainly don't want to be a microwave burger masquerading as wagyu steak.

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Leesha Crasta
6h · Edited

AI for the poor, Art for the rich

There has been and influx in luxury fashion brands advertising with art that is handmade, showcasing craftmanship signifying care and suggesting class, meanwhile consumer brands like Pepsi rely highly on generative AI for their creative pursuits, is generative AI becoming synonyms gaucheness.

In the movie The Devil Wears Prada Meryl Streep's character who plays Miranda Priestly has a monologue about how fashion trickles down to general consumers based on what a few people choose to put on the runways of luxury brands. A niche item always loses its favourability once adopted by the general masses as luxury functions on exclusivity.

This suggests in our current environments that there is going to be a shift in how people position brands based on the brands use of generative AI in their means of communicating to consumers, whether it be perception of sincerity or quality.

Dior in the same week was caught using AI for the social media holiday ad right after laurels were sung about Prada's hand drawn animation holiday ad starring Sadie Sink, both using nostalgia of watching old cartoons, one received positively and one not.

Although a helpful tool, Brands need to be cautious on how they utilise AI going forward, is it helping the brand stand out or are we drowning in pool of brands with similar generated content.

#generativeai #ai #luxury #prada #dior

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Tanishqua Kasarpu
22h

In an age where everything can be generated, Christian Dior Couture and Prada remind us that not everything should be.

Both maisons' latest holiday campaigns are beautiful reminders of what happens when creativity is given the time, patience and human touch it deserves.

Dior takes us back to 1949, drawing inspiration from its founder's legacy, his relationship with Marlene Dietrich and the iconic Junon gown. Through Sylvain Chomet's hand-drawn animation, the maison brings its heritage and the artistry of its couture ateliers to life.

Prada, meanwhile, takes a different yet equally compelling approach. Through Drawing Prada: Animated by Hand, it combines traditional pencil-and-paper illustration with live-action imagery, bringing a whimsical, hand-drawn world into its campaign. A fitting nod to a house whose story began in 1913 with handcrafted leather goods and a commitment to quality and craftsmanship.

Different creative expressions, but a shared sentiment: a celebration of the people, processes and artistic traditions behind creation.

Perhaps that's what makes these campaigns so refreshing.

In a world where almost anything can be generated, the real luxury might just be knowing that something was imagined, drawn and brought to life by human hands.

Because the beauty isn't always just in what we create, but in how we create it.

#dior #prada #humancreativity #ai

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Cristian Medeleanu
1d

"The devil lies in the details."

This is what Dior should have probably done after releasing their "Christian Dior's Night in Color" holiday campaign ...more

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Justin Taylor
1d

How cool is the BTS on Levi's new Claymation holiday ad 👀

It took four hours of filming to get one second of animation, and the sets alone took a six person build team over 2,000 hours across six and a half weeks, three cabin ...more

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