



— NEPA WHITEPAPER · CREATIVE AI

Creative excellence at scale

How AI-driven creative analytics unlocked a >40% CPA reduction for Wolt on TikTok.

FEATURING

Wolt × TikTok × nepa

Creative AI case study
IIEG Europe 2026 · Amsterdam

— EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Most marketing teams treat creative as a matter of taste — they brief, review, pick a direction, and hope. Every other lever gets rigour. The one that matters most gets opinion.

Creative is the single largest underinvested lever in digital advertising — and AI now lets us measure and optimise it with the same discipline we apply to media, audiences and budget. This is the story of how Wolt, TikTok and nepa proved it across 25+ markets.

<p>>40%</p> <p>Potential CPA reduction when best practice is followed</p>	<p>>60%</p> <p>CPA gap between the top and bottom 10% of creatives</p>	<p>86%</p> <p>Of Wolt's videos sat below "good" creative levels</p>
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Why creative is the most underinvested lever

THE EVIDENCE

Powerful creative can be **10–20x more sales-effective** than mediocre work (Ehrenberg-Bass). Award-winning campaigns turn excess share of voice into market share roughly **5x more efficiently** (IPA).

THE GAP

Yet creative remains one of the least measured dimensions of marketing. nepa's work across hundreds of clients shows optimising creative excellence can lift marketing ROI by **+10–15%** — on par with allocation, ahead of pacing.

— THE CASE · WOLT x TIKTOK x NEPA

Why do some ads outperform — and how do we repeat it?

Wolt is one of TikTok's most advanced advertisers in Europe: thousands of always-on campaigns a year across growth, brand and courier recruitment. Creative came from many teams and partners — with no shared, evidence-based view of what “good” actually looks like.

TIKTOK

Platform-level performance data and deep knowledge of what works natively in the feed.

NEPA

Creative AI analytics — classifying creative features at scale and linking them to performance.

WOLT

Scale, ambition, and the willingness to put creative under the microscope.

How we decoded performance at scale

01

Classify

AI codes every creative feature across thousands of ads — logo, faces, food, hooks, overlays, narrative.

02

Link to CPA

Statistical drivers analysis isolates which features actually move acquisition cost — not which seem important.

03

Score

A composite Creative Score per ad, weighted by the dimensions proven to drive effect.

SAME LIBRARY, OPPOSITE OUTCOMES

A high Creative Score delivered dramatically lower CPA than a low one.

84

LOW
CPA

VS

07

HIGH
CPA


— WHAT WE FOUND

The creative features that actually move CPA


<p>BRAND LOGO LESS ↓</p> <p>Less is more</p> <p>Low logo frequency performed best. Heavy branding up front signals “this is an ad” and triggers the scroll.</p> <hr/> <p>29% over-exposed the logo</p>	<p>HUMAN FACES MORE ↑</p> <p>People beat products</p> <p>The single strongest positive driver. TikTok rewards content that feels made by a person, not a brand.</p> <hr/> <p>41% had little or no face</p>	<p>FOOD IN FRAME LESS ↓</p> <p>Context beats convention</p> <p>Less food won — even for a delivery brand. Generic food shots have become category wallpaper.</p> <hr/> <p>28% over-indexed on food</p>
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CPA BY CREATIVE DECILE

Top 10% of creatives Lowest CPA



Bottom 10% of creatives Highest CPA



More than **60% higher CPA** in the bottom decile than the top — a direct, consistent link between Creative Score and cost.

37–38%

Potential CPA reduction for **both brand and acquisition** — but the winning recipes differ. Each needs its own playbook.

86%

Of videos sat below “good” — the headroom that exists even for a sophisticated advertiser.

— FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

The Wolt TikTok Creative Playbook

Analysis only creates value when it changes behaviour. The findings became a practical toolbox — every recommendation traceable to data, not platform folklore.

OPENING SECONDS

Lead with a person, a situation or a question in the first 0–2s. Never a logo card.

BRANDING APPROACH

Present, not dominant. Integrate through app UI, brand colour and environmental cues.

PEOPLE & CONTEXT

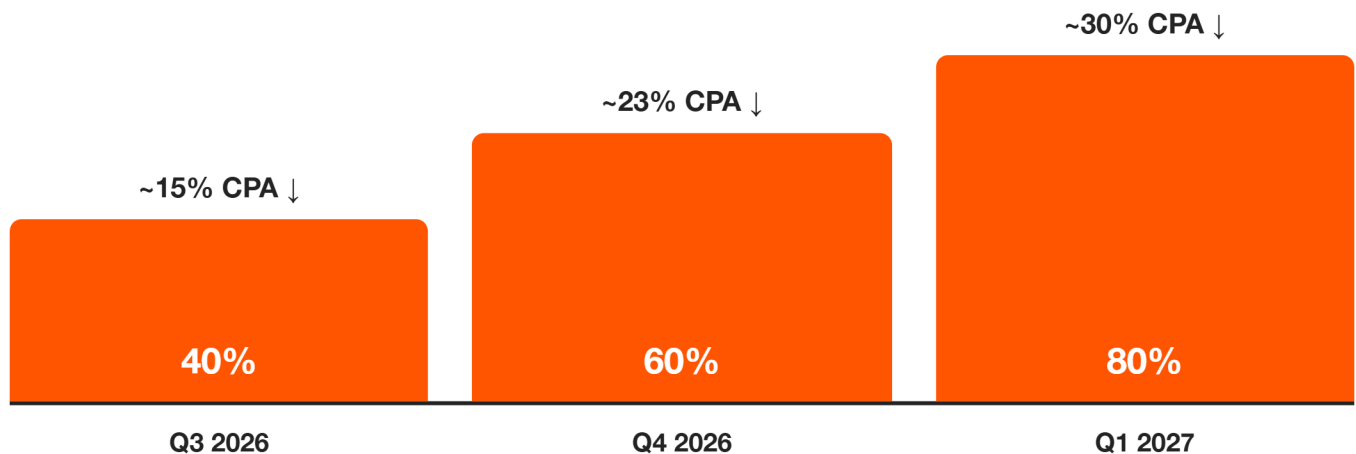
Faces high, contextual storytelling high, product-in-frame moderate to low.

FORMAT & CTA

Platform-calibrated length and call-to-action, set against the performance data.

Closing the gap, quarter by quarter

Share of best-practice videos ↑, with the CPA reduction it is expected to unlock.



A continuous loop: **Assess** → **Adopt** → **Measure** → **Refine**

— IMPLICATIONS · FIVE TAKEAWAYS

- 01 **Creative deserves the same rigour as media.** Its performance variance is at least as large — often larger.
- 02 **Platform-specific playbooks win.** What works on TikTok differs from Meta, YouTube or TV. Generic best practice isn't enough.
- 03 **AI solves the measurement problem, not the creativity problem.** It gives talented people better information to work with.
- 04 **Your creative gap is bigger than you think.** 86% of a leader's ads were below “good”. You can't close a gap you haven't quantified.
- 05 **Optimisation is continuous, not a one-off.** Run Assess–Adopt–Measure–Refine every quarter.

74%

of AI adoption in marketing is driven by efficiency — only **13%** by creativity and performance. The missed opportunity is understanding what works, not just producing faster.

Top 6

AI is now a top-six source of inspiration for Gen Z — outranking TV. Systematic, data-driven creative decisions matter more than ever.

nepa

nepa builds the bridge between brand and business — connecting Brand Tracking, Campaign Evaluation, Marketing Mix Modelling and Creative AI into one continuous decision system. From gut-feel to evidence-led growth.

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