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How does the use of AI-generated content in Human-Computer Interaction affect a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers?

Master's thesis in Interaction Design and Technology's

HANNA GISSELBLAD SEIBT
PAWAN SHASAWAR

Department of Computer Science and Engineering
CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
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HANNA GISSELBLAD SEIBT
PAWAN SHASAWAR

Supervisor: Thommy Eriksson, Department of Computer Science and Engineering
Examiner: Palle Dahlstedt, Department of Computer Science and Engineering

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Department of Computer Science and Engineering
Chalmers University of Technology and University of Gothenburg
SE-412 96 Gothenburg
Telephone +46 31 772 1000

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Abstract

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is considered a transformative tool that has made a significant impact on the field of technology. One field that has been substantially affected by the integration of GenAI is Human-Computer Interaction (HCI), where its adoption has led to numerous benefits. Simultaneously, the increased use of AI-generated content has also raised several concerns, specifically the perceived authenticity of AI-generated content. This study explores how the use of AI-generated content in the field of HCI affects a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers. A qualitative research approach was applied through semi-structured interviews with eleven participants, including five designers and six users. A thematic analysis was conducted to analyze the collected data. The findings indicate that human involvement and transparency are essential factors for how AI-generated content is perceived. The results also highlight the importance of implementing GenAI strategically and as a supportive tool in order to maintain perceived authenticity. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of authenticity in relation to GenAI in the field of HCI.

Keywords: GenAI, Authenticity, Brand Authenticity, AI- generated Content, HCI, Designers, Users, Human Involvement, Transparency.

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Introduction

1.1 Background

Generative AI (GenAI) is considered a transformative technology, which possesses the ability to generate output including text, images and audio based on natural language processing input [1], [2]. The advent of GenAI is ascribed to the release of OpenAI's GPT transformer, which occurred at the end of 2022, and its implementation came to influence numerous different industries and areas of society [2], [3]. Furthermore, the utilization of GenAI within organizations has increased significantly over the past few years, and statistics demonstrate an increase of 33% in 2023 to 71% in 2024 in terms of organizations regularly using GenAI in at least one business function [4].

The use of GenAI has been implemented in a variety of fields, which has given rise to numerous opportunities. However, the rapid adoption of GenAI also entails a wide range of key challenges that may emerge within an organization [5]. Since the integration of GenAI is still a relatively new and explorative field, new research is regularly added that reshapes the perception of GenAI.

One sector that currently integrates GenAI and that may face a revolutionary change, is the field of HCI. A prior study conducted by Kalving et al [6] shows how GenAI has become a valuable asset within the design community, where an integration of GenAI has resulted in improved efficiency, task automation and the ability to generate creative content. However, there are certain concerns regarding an implementation of GenAI including art theft and copyright issues, which are also emphasized by the designers. Additionally, prior research conducted by Li et al. [7] highlights a perceived risk of skill degradation, and explains how senior designers in their study expressed how this can be devastating for junior designers, as they may miss out on opportunities to develop their skills as designers.

The rise of AI-generated content (AIGC) has resulted in concerns regarding authenticity [8]. Authenticity can be described in terms of something being perceived as original, sincere and genuine [9], which is attributed by observers [10]. Currently, there exist some research studies exploring a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users, within other creative fields. A study carried out by Brüns and Meißner [11], shows how the utilization of GenAI for content creation within the field of social media, diminishes the perception of brand authenticity. The findings

show how the adoption of GenAI resulted in reduced brand authenticity, including a reduced perception of credibility regarding posts, reduced loyalty towards the brand and the likelihood of engagement in positive electronic word-of-mouth, was reduced. However, the results indicated that the followers' concerns decreased when GenAI assisted rather than automated the content creation [11]. Thus, there is currently a lack of understanding how users in the field of HCI would respond in a similar study. While there currently exists scientific research that provides an understanding of possibilities, limitations and ethical considerations of an integration of GenAI in the design field, there is a lack of understanding of how the utilization of GenAI in the field of HCI affects a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers. A limited understanding of this area could potentially reduce a company's perceived authenticity and credibility among the users, and affect the role of designers and the designer's professional identity, which can result in a sense of dissatisfaction since the designer is not given the opportunity to act fully in the role as a designer. This may in turn affect the image of a company and its competitiveness in the labor market. By conducting a scientific study within this area, there is a possibility to guide companies integrating GenAI in a way that preserves the perception of authenticity.

As previously mentioned, GenAI is considered a transformative technology, which possesses the ability to generate output including text, images and audio based on natural language processing input [1], [2]. This study will focus on textual and visual content, which in this study refers solely to textual outputs such as ideas, bullet-point lists, text paragraphs, as well as visual illustrations including images, sketches, mockups and figures.

1.2 Aim

This paper aims to contribute to an understanding of how the utilization of AI-generated content in the field of HCI affects a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers. There is currently a lack of research investigating how the implementation of GenAI within a company affects users' perceived authenticity, and at present there is an existing knowledge gap in the literature addressing designers' perceived authenticity of a company. Hence, this paper seeks to contribute to new insights and findings in the field of HCI.

1.3 Goals

The goal of this study is to examine how the usage of GenAI content in the field of HCI affects a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers. Additionally, the paper seeks to answer how UX/interaction designers experience and integrate GenAI in the design process, and to propose practical guidelines for how a company can maintain perceived authenticity while utilizing GenAI.

1.4 Research Questions

This master thesis seeks to answer one research question with three related subquestions. The questions are as follows:

- RQ: How does the use of AI-generated content in Human-Computer Interaction affect a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers?
- SQ1: How do UX/interaction designers experience and integrate GenAI in the design process?
- SQ2: How do users perceive AI-generated content in terms of authenticity?
- SQ3: What guidelines should a company follow when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic?

1.5 Perceived vs Actual Authenticity and Ethics

There is a difference between being perceived as authentic and ethical and *actually* being so. Companies often have a tendency to present themselves as strong and responsible actors, with core values reflected in ethical guidelines and policy documents that a company should adhere to. This type of company image can lead to increased trust among external stakeholders and contribute to the company being perceived as authentic. However, there is a risk that these implemented guidelines are not applied in various organizational decisions and actions, in practice. We therefore believe that it is important to distinguish between what a company communicates externally, and its actual behavior in order to maintain customer trust and be authentic and ethical.

1.6 The Use of AI in this Study

In this study, AI tools was used to support, streamline and improve the quality of the research and writing process in various ways. The AI tools applied throughout the process were ChatGPT and Google Gemini. Furthermore, AI was, for example, used to identify scientific articles that were not retrieved through manual searching on Google Scholar. In addition, AI tools for linguistic review of text, such as improving sentence structure, suggesting synonyms, and checking grammar in the English language, were applied to ensure good and easy understanding for the reader. Furthermore, AI was used to create a clearer outline of different chapters and sections, to create a coherent text and have a clear common thread throughout the thesis. Additionally, AI, specifically Google Gemini, was used to create images that were later used in the study's "picture element". Finally, AI tools were used to ensure that no relevant information or perspectives were overlooked, for example, after the development of interview questions.

2

Theory

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of this study. It covers previous research studies and key concepts, including authenticity, previous perceptions of GenAI and AI-generated content, that are relevant for the study's topic. Furthermore, the chapter also outlines vital insights regarding creativity, ethical considerations, branches of artificial intelligence and the history of AI.

2.1 The History of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a phenomenon that traces back to the 1950s, where Alan Turing's paper "Computing Machinery and Intelligence" from the 1950s became a fundamental work that predicted many of the trends and developments in AI over the last 50 years [12]. Turing first spoke publicly about machine intelligence in a lecture back in 1947 and further explored the topic in his report "Intelligent Machinery" in 1948. Turing's early work is often considered to be the start of the theory and the fundamental understanding of AI.

Building on the early ideas about machine learning, Turing proposed the imitation game, later known as the "Turing Test" [13]. The purpose of the imitation game is to see whether a person can distinguish between a human and a computer, by asking questions to a computer and a human that are hidden [12]. It was during the imitation game where Turing proposed the infamous question "Can machines think?" [14]. The imitation game laid the foundational framework for the future of AI [13]. However, even though the Turing Test became a vital part of AI, it has also received criticism. Gunderson [12] argued that passing the Turing Test does not automatically mean that a machine is intelligent. It is possible to trace the work on intelligent machines back to Turing's paper from 1950 [15].

However, the term AI was not coined until 1956 by John McCarthy and his associates [13], [16]. The official birth of AI is widely considered to be the 1956 Dartmouth Conference [17]. The Dartmouth Conference led several important developments in AI, such as the work of Newell and Simon, who developed the "Logic Theorist", a system that was designed to prove theorems in symbolic logic. Other important developments in AI included Arthur Samuel's reinforcement learning program and Frank Rosenblatt Mark I Perceptron, which became an important step in the development of modern neural networks [18].

2.2 Branches of Artificial Intelligence

AI refers to computers that have the ability to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence. It includes tasks such as problem-solving, visual perception, speech recognition and language translation. AI aims to imitate human cognitive functions, enabling machines to learn from experience, adapt to new information and perform tasks independently [19].

2.2.1 Machine Learning

AI has gone from rule-based systems, following exact instructions to machine learning [19]. Machine learning has been defined in several ways [20], where Arthur Samuel [21] described it as computers getting better at tasks by learning from experience instead of being directly programmed. According to El Naqa and Murphy [20], Mitchell (1997) defines machine learning as the ability of a computer to improve its performance on a task by learning from experience.

Both of the definitions highlight that computers can learn from their environment through repeated examples [20]. Furthermore, a machine learning algorithm is trained on data to learn and create models that have the capability to perform tasks that are usually done by humans, including analyzing data, predicting prices and sorting images [22].

There exist three types of machine learning algorithms: supervised learning, unsupervised learning and reinforcement learning [19]. Supervised learning is a type of machine learning that is trained using labeled data, where the correct answers are already known. This helps with predicting accurate conclusions when it is given new data. Supervised learning is commonly used to predict future events using historical data. Furthermore, unsupervised learning is a type of machine learning that is not given the correct answer in advance. Instead, the program is given a large dataset and must find patterns and relationships by itself. The goal with this type of machine learning is to find hidden patterns in the data. Compared to supervised learning, unsupervised learning is used for more complex tasks. Moreover, reinforcement learning is a type of machine learning where programs are trained through trial and error and receive feedback in form of rewards. The goal with this machine learning is to reach an optimal outcome [22].

2.2.2 Large Language Models

Naveed et al. [23] highlight that language plays a vital role in communication between humans and machines. The authors explain that the need for machines to perform tasks such as translation, summarization and conversational interactions has contributed to the development of Large Language Models (LLM). LLMs are trained using large-scaled training data and transformer architecture, which enables them to process and generate coherent text.

2.2.3 Generative AI

Generative AI (GenAI) is a type of AI that is capable of creating new content, such as text, images, videos and solutions to problems with human-like creativity. GenAI has in recent years improved remarkably, including major advances in the development of e.g., ChatGPT [24]. ChatGPT is a GenAI chatbot that uses natural language processing (NLP) in order to generate output, such as text, images, codes and summaries. ChatGPT was developed by OpenAI and was released in 2022. ChatGPT operates by using generative pretrained transformers (GPTs), which are a type of LLM, created by OpenAI [25]. The development of ChatGPT has been made possible by over 50 years of progress in GenAI, including important milestones such as the rise of deep learning, the introduction of transformer architecture and the creation of foundation models [24].

2.3 Previous Research on the Perception of GenAI

Prior research on the design community's perception of the rapid development of GenAI conducted by Kalving et al. [6], suggests that the community experiences both advantages and disadvantages with an integration of GenAI. The paper indicates that the community views AI as a collaborative partner in the design process, and that the participants preferred the approach "human in the loop" when integrating AI. The importance of the designers inherent abilities including empathy and understanding for the user, was emphasized as essential to be able to integrate AI. In addition, using AI was also considered as a way to bounce ideas with. Other perceived advantages of integrating AI were improved efficiency, task automation and the ability to generate creative content [6]. The potential for a generation of creative material, is also highlighted by Muller et al. [26], explaining how different GenAI methods have the ability to generate valuable, unexpected and unique output. The paper also explains, with the help of AI, that there is an opportunity to support innovative thinking and how AI is seen as a tool for expanded creative thinking.

Moreover, Kalving et al. [6] highlighted some concerns regarding an integration of AI in the design process, including art theft, copyright issues and an experienced laziness by designers when using AI tools. Moreover, a broad-ranging trust towards GenAI tools among the interview participants was highlighted. It emerged that some experienced a certain mistrust in the usage of AI tools, because of the risk of a chatbot confidently lying to the user. It was also stated that a perceived trust in AI depended on the situation and context, where, e.g., there was low trust in issues related to healthcare, but higher regarding photo editing.

The book "AI for designers" [27] discusses how AI influences the design process, highlighting both its limitations and possibilities. The authors underline how AI can be used as a collaborative tool that designers can benefit from, since they work in a workplace that is constantly shifting. Furthermore, it is emphasized that AI will make the design process more efficient for designers. However, despite its potential, AI also has its limitations, including its difficulties comprehending the subtle differences between emotions. Design that is based on emotions is important according

to Triberti et al. [28], since it can create meaning, affect attention and memory. In addition, emotions may also influence the user experience deeply since it has an impact on decision-making. Moreover, humans have the ability to analyze body language, social signals and context which are grounded in cultural norms and learned behaviours. Emotions have been vital in helping humans survive throughout history [27]. Shane [29] performed an experiment training a neural network with thousands of pick up lines to show that flattery can be learned. However, the result of the experiment made it clear that it is challenging to teach intelligent machines how to recognize or communicate nuances of emotional states. Akhtar and Ramkumar [27] highlights how AI cannot fully provide or replace a human's judgement, it lacks the emotional judgement designers provide. The authors point out the importance of humans maintaining control over the design process. The role of AI is to assist, not to replace and it is therefore not considered a threat to designers.

Luo [30] conducted a systematic literature review on what role AI brings to the UX design practices by analyzing 83 empirical studies. Findings from the study showed that AI is in most cases used to evaluate design activities in an effective way. It increases efficiency by automating routine tasks and supporting continuous user evaluation. Predicting UX was the most common evaluate activity followed by identifying issues, supporting qualitative studies and customizing user studies. Furthermore, it was also highlighted that GenAI was used as support in the ideation and prototyping process. According to Takafoli et al. [31] HCI practitioners have started using GenAI tools such as Midjourney and ChatGPT to help with brainstorming, assist with UX writing and help visualize ideas.

In a previous study conducted by Ebel et al. [32] designers were interviewed about their thoughts on GenAI output. The designers expressed a concern that their creativity would be hindered by an engagement with GenAI in the ideation phase. Some of the designers also expressed a concern that relying too much on data-driven insights can result in the designers becoming too fixated with small refinements instead of being encouraged to think outside the box. Furthermore, Jiang et al. [33] also highlight that some designers felt that the use of GenAI made their sense of ownership feel reduced in the final result. Luo [30] also highlights that GenAI is primarily used to gain an initial understanding of users rather than for generating insights grounded in quantitative data analytics, emphasizing that there is a gap in using AI to understand real users. Furthermore, Luo shed light on predictive AI, stating that it is mainly used for helping analyze user behaviours, patterns and emotions using quantitative data, while GenAI is mainly used for brainstorming and exploring design alternatives. The author argues that both of the technologies have their strength but that future studies could integrate both these technologies to support and create a more holistic and personalized UX design process.

2.4 GenAI and Creativity

Previous research emphasizes the importance of involvement in the creative process, since it has intrinsic value for the individual [34]. In a previous study conducted by Ackerman and Loker [35], it was highlighted that a potential benefit with the

integration of AI tools is to support the individual in engaging in meaningful creative processes by improving accessibility to the creative process. This can be achieved by GenAI tools providing the user with functionalities that lowers the barrier to entry. Additionally, ALYSIA was highlighted as an example where the tool supports the user in a co-creative songwriting process. The user enters an input to ALYSIA and then the tool generates suggestions for new song lyrics.

According to Dahlstedt [36], AI algorithms can predict patterns in existing sequences and generate outputs based on these patterns. These algorithms can be applied in tasks such as design, strategy, imitation or creativity. However, Dahlstedt argues that simply imitating output from human artists is fundamentally non-creative. Dahlstedt further highlights that statistical machine learning systems are trained on existing data and generate output with similar statistical properties, meaning that it does not have the ability to create something new. According to Dahlstedt, creativity means creating new patterns, whereas most machine techniques focus on reproducing patterns that already exist.

Prior research conducted by Runco [37], highlights "artificial creativity" and argues that AI should be viewed as generating artificial creativity or "pseudo-creativity", rather than human creativity. Furthermore, Runco explains how artificial intelligence lacks a number of characteristics of human creativity, where Kharkhurin [38] highlights authenticity as one important criterion in human creativity.

Furthermore, Boden [39] argues that creativity can be computationally modelled and explains how AI has the ability to create new ideas through novelty, by exploring conceptual spaces and by making transformations that enable the creation of prior impossible ideas. However, Boden also highlights two major bottlenecks for AI creativity; "domain-expertise" and "valuation of the results". Boden concludes that it will be easier for AI to generate new ideas than to evaluate them automatically.

2.4.1 Creativity in the Divergent Thinking Stages

In a study exploring the use and perception of AI in the divergent thinking stages, from the perspective of designers in the UI and UX fields [40], findings partially indicate a correlation between AI and automation. It emerges that the participants in the study used AI tools in order to enhance efficiency and automate routine tasks. Tasks included was for instance summarizing scientific articles, an organization of design artifacts and to create a design for multiple screens. This led to a reduction of manual effort, which aligns with the perception that AI is efficient in streamlining workflow in the UI and UX field [31], [40]. Khan et al. [40], outlines how different GenAI tools are used for different purposes, including ChatGPT streamline data collection and MidJourney, Uizard and DALL-E help to generate visual outputs and prototypes.

Furthermore the study highlights that the use of AI for automation of routine tasks, means a support for creativity since designers can devote more time to exploration and similar creative activities [40]. Tasks included for example an organization of design artifacts, summarizing scientific articles and to create a design for multiple

screens. In addition, the study emphasizes how the usage of AI tools aims to explore and inspire different ideas, and not to strive to create a final artifact. The study also states that a misuse of automation and efficiency, meaning a shorter exploration phase, ultimately inhibits creativity. Moreover it is highlighted that AI can help the designer by "providing a starting point for innovation" [40, p. 10], and explains how the designer may find it difficult to start the creative design process. Various problems can underlie this, including a fear of failure. In addition, Tholander and Jonsson [41] present evidence that GenAI improves the ideation phase since outputs, that might not be directly considered by human designers, are created.

2.4.2 The Effect of AI-generated Images in the Ideation Phase

Wadinambiarachchi et al. [42] explores how the use of generated tools affect designers creativity during the ideation phase. A qualitative analysis was performed where the designers were exposed to an example design before the start of the ideation phase. The findings indicate how the use of AI-generated images had a negative effect on the participants during the ideation phase. In addition, GenAI reduced the variation and originality in the ideation phase and caused an increased design fixation among the designers. Moreover, it became clear that the designers focused too much on the AI-generated image and ended up copying what the image illustrated, even though the designers were attempting to explore new ideas. This was something that became clear when the participants were shown an example of a robot avatar. During the ideation process, many participants focused on the robot example and copied what they saw, instead of developing new and original ideas. The sketches that the participants produced were very similar to the example robot, showing that the participants became fixated when co-creating with GenAI. The study emphasizes how AI-generated images can be useful for inspiration but at the same time limit the creative thinking in early stages, including the ideation phase, where divergent thinking is vital.

2.5 Cognitive Offloading and Cognitive Overload

Cognitive offloading refers to the usage of external tools, including AI tools, to decrease the level of cognitive load on one's working memory [43]. Cognitive load refers to "the amount of mental effort being utilized in working memory at any given time" [44, p. 1]. By using external tools, it becomes easier for one to process information and to manage different responsibilities, and the risk of overwhelming one's working memory is decreased. Cognitive offload may contribute to improved efficiency since cognitive resources will be free by the offloading, while cognitive overload in a working environment, may result in poorer task performance and longer task completion times [45].

However, a risk posed by cognitive offloading is where an overreliance on AI tools reduces the need for cognitive involvement, which can result in a negative effect on critical thinking [46]. A study conducted by Khan and Suhluli [40], highlights

the correlation between academic researchers, the usage of GenAI and cognitive challenges, and also underline the risk that an excessive dependence on GenAI may contribute more to cognitive stress and reduced quality of the scientific work. There is also evidence that an overreliance on AI tools, may lead to cognitive overload [47], [48].

2.6 GenAI and Ethical Considerations

A study conducted by Yoon and Jun [49] highlights different types of ethical concerns that may occur during the user experience designer (UXer)-AI co-creation process. The study identified three issues: data reliability, biased information and automation and unemployment. Data reliability refers to the risk of misleading or false information being produced by GenAI, and it may be because of training on outdated data. In addition, Kasneci et al. [50] highlights concerns regarding easy access to AI-generated information may negatively affect critical thinking and problem solving skills. The authors argue that users may become lazy and less interested in investigating information and draw their own conclusions or solutions. Furthermore, Yoon and Jun [49] explains that biased information concerns the risk of certain groups being excluded from the generated responses. In addition, there is a perception among the participants in the study that the produced information is too generic, since the information produced is only based on the available training data. Therefore the execution of user research in real- world settings is still considered to be valuable. Moreover, automation and unemployment refers to perception of the fear of the risk of AI leading to an increased level of unemployment. However, achieving full automation does not currently seem possible, because of the prior mentioned ethical issues. In addition, the study's result emphasizes a collaboration between AI and humans, and not a replacement of AI.

Prior research on UX designers perception on GenAI, also highlights copyright and ownership as another ethical concern [7]. The study reveals that there were divided opinions among participants, on to what extent GenAI should be recognized as a creator in the design process, and whether GenAI should be recognized at all. The findings partially showed that in cases where the individual is the "main" designer and where GenAI only has been used as a tool and has served as a support in the process, the individual should be recognized as the creator. However, some participants highlighted the importance of attributing ownership to the part of the work that is created with the help of GenAI or labeling it as "AI-contributed". In contrast, it was also argued that GenAI is not a human being, and therefore should not be assigned ownership. In addition one participant said *[...] if you are the one refining, crafting the prompt, contributing creativity and thoughts to AI for generating the work, and overseeing the entire process, ownership should be attributed to humans* [7, p. 11].

An additional ethical issue that was highlighted by the authors [7] was the perceived risk of skill degradation. The risk of skill degradation derives from how tasks and activities that previously have been executed by designers, are now instead performed by GenAI. Senior designers in the study expressed how this can be devastating for

junior designers, as they may miss out on opportunities to develop their skills as designers.

Bender et al. [51] highlight risks and harms related to larger language models such as GPT-2 and GPT-3. The authors discuss how these large language models present different kinds of biases, such as stereotypical associations or negative attitudes towards certain groups. This is because these models are trained on large amounts of internet based data which may contain biases on underrepresented groups. Furthermore, the authors also raised concerns regarding the environmental impact, referring to previous research by Strubell et al. [52], which highlighted the high energy consumption required to train large language models.

2.7 Source Credibility Theory

According to Hovland et al. [53], the Source Credibility Theory states that people are more likely to be persuaded when the source is seen as credible. Hovland and Weiss [54] conducted an experiment where they studied how a communicator's credibility influences people's opinion. Two groups were presented with identical messages but from different communicators, one was regarded as trustworthy and the other one was regarded as untrustworthy. The trustworthy communicator was perceived as highly credible while the untrustworthy communicator was regarded as having low credibility. They used different types of sources to represent the high credibility sources and the low credibility sources. The high credibility sources were for instance a well established journal and a well known physicist. In contrast, the low credibility sources were biased sources, one being a newspaper that was described as anti-labor, rightist and anti-New Deal. The results from the experiment indicated that the high credibility sources influenced people's opinion more compared to the low credibility sources.

Message factors can also have an effect on source credibility. For instance, when people read online reviews from users they don't know, it's most likely that they don't have any prior opinion about the reviewer. This results in the readers forming a judgement toward the reviewers and the product at the same time [55]. If the receiver does not have prior knowledge about the source, they tend to determine the source credibility based on how the message is presented, how trustworthy it seems and have convincing supporting evidence [56]. Source credibility plays a key role when it comes to influencing consumers processing or decision-making [53].

Source credibility is understood as a multidimensional concept and consists of three dimensions: expertise/competence, trustworthiness and caring/goodwill. Expertise/competence refers to the receiver's impression on the communicator's proficiency to make correct statements. Trustworthiness means how much the receiver believes the communicator's intentions are accurate [53]. Caring/goodwill refers to if the receiver believes that the communicator wants to tell the truth [57].

2.8 Authenticity

According to The Britannica Dictionary, something authentic is described as real or genuine, rather than copied or false. Authentic was also described in terms of "true and accurate". Similarly, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy [58] states *to say that something is authentic is to say that it is what it professes to be.* In the context of tourism research, authenticity is associated with something genuine, real, or unique, according to Wang [59], who draws on Sharpley (1994).

2.8.1 Digital Authenticity

An article written by Pedersen and Ritter [15] explores the concept of digital authenticity and its increasing importance in today's society driven by GenAI. Digital authenticity is how real and trustworthy digital content, interactions and data feel, based on the perceived connection to a real person, place or time. This has become important as AI-generated content is increasingly realistic, making it challenging to distinguish between authentic and generated material. Mollick [60] highlights that GenAI systems such as ChatGPT are already widely used and that the content that they produce is often challenging to distinguish from content created by humans. In light of this development, Pedersen and Ritter [15] argues that it changes how we think about trust in digital interactions. It is indicated that when content looks realistic but is not clearly linked to a human creator, users may find it difficult to judge whether it is trustworthy. This affects everyday digital communication where it becomes unclear who is behind a message or action and where the authorship becomes uncertain. Digital content can very easily be created and copied, making it difficult to judge its authenticity by just looking at the content alone. For this reason, the article highlights the need for actor-specific verification, which is crucial because it helps prevent fraud and abuse. This type of verification shifts the attention from the content to the person that is responsible. It becomes difficult to know who is responsible without reliable authentication. The article emphasizes that digital authenticity can have both positive and negative effects. It can help business-to-business to create value for the organization, customers, partners and society by enabling the effective use of AI-enabled systems. At the same time, it creates challenges related to trust and responsibility.

2.8.2 Brand Authenticity

Prior research emphasizes the importance of authenticity and underlines how the term has become one of the most important characteristics that a consumer seeks for in a brand [61], [62]

In their paper, Morhart et al. [61] present the development of a conceptual definition of Perceived Brand Authenticity (PBA), and a measuring scale including 15 items of consumers PBA across four different dimensions; credibility, integrity, symbolism, and continuity. Morhart et al. [61] highlight three perspectives of authenticity; the objectivist perspective, the constructivist perspective and the existentialist perspective, and explains how PBA emerges from an interplay of the three perspectives.

According to Morhart et al. [61] the objectivist perspective, in a branding context, is when brand authenticity perceptions emerge from an "evidence-based reality that can be assessed using verifiable information about the brand, such as labels of origin, age, ingredients, or performance" [61, p. 2]. In addition, Grayson and Martinec [63] utilize the term "indexical" to refer to the objectivist perspective and underline how "indexicality distinguishes 'the real thing' from its copies" [63, p. 298]. Furthermore, the constructivist perspective suggests that authenticity rather is seen as a projection of one's own perspective, expectations and beliefs [59]. In addition, Beverland et al. [64] explains how authenticity in a branding context is considered a brand's ability to develop "schematic fit" that aligns with the consumers expectations of what makes a brand authentic. The existentialist perspective refers to one being true to oneself [65]. Additionally, Morhart et al. [61] states that existential authenticity in a branding context, is a brand capacity to act as a means for consumers to allow consumers to experience one being true to one self when consuming the brand.

As previously mentioned Morhart et al. [61] were able to determine four dimensions of PBA; credibility, integrity, symbolism, and continuity, based on a qualitative research approach. The first dimension is credibility which refers to a brand's ability to be transparent and honest towards the consumer, but also the brand's willingness and ability to fulfill its promises. The associated items are: "A brand that will not betray you", "An honest brand" and "A brand that accomplishes its value promise". The second dimension integrity includes the perception of a brand acting ethically and correctly. This dimension also refers to a brand's responsibility and moral purity, meaning the brand's compliance to good values. The associated items are: "A brand that gives back to its consumers", "A brand with moral principles", "A brand true to a set of moral values" and "A brand that cares about its consumers". The third dimension symbolism is a brand's ability to potentially serve as a means for identity construction. This is possible when the brand provides self-referential cues such as relationships, roles and values. The symbolism dimension consists among others of the items: "A brand that reflects important values people care about", "A brand that connects people with their real self" and "A brand that connects people with what is really important". The fourth dimension continuity refers to a brand's historicity, timelessness and the ability to survive trends. Continuity includes the items: "A brand with a history", "A timeless brand", "A brand that survives times" and "A brand that survives trends".

Other key dimensions of brand authenticity are individuality, originality, naturalness, credibility, reliability, consistency, continuity, integrity and symbolism, as cited in Abratt and Bendixen [66]. The dimensions of individuality, originality, and naturalness all refer to a brand that differentiates itself from other brands, by applying a novel approach to branding and by being genuine.

2.8.3 Organizational Authenticity

Organizational authenticity refers to an organization that acts in line with its purposes and values, has a transparent and honest communication style with stakeholders and to which extent an organization is acting truthfully to itself [67]. According

to Shen and Kim's conceptualization of organizational authenticity, it contains three dimensions: truthfulness, transparency and consistency. The first dimension truthfulness refers to an organization presenting its true self when it aligns with the organization's vision, value, mission and character. Shen and Kim explains that when an organization is considered authentic, the organization maintains a solid understanding e.g., for its heritage and history, of what defines the organization and how the organization can distinguish itself from other organizations. Furthermore, Shen and Kim underline how transparency and authenticity are intertwined. In addition, transparency refers to an organization being open when sharing information, including the ability to openly share the organization's intentions and motives and to be able to present the genuine self honestly and transparently. Furthermore, consistency refers to an organization being consistent with its truthful claims, promises, organizational offerings and behaviors. Additionally, what an organization says and does should align with the beliefs, principles, values and character of the organization.

2.8.4 Authenticity from the Perspective of Designers and Consumers

Prior research, as discussed by Kristav [68] and originally proposed by Fuller (2013), underlines the importance of honesty as an element of authentic design within the field of product design. It is shown that if a product's material appears like wood, it should be wood and not an imitation of a wood material. Furthermore, the importance of honesty extending to the production process of the output is emphasized, and it emerges that an authentic design ought to expose the process that underlie the creation.

Kristav [68], defines the term authenticity within the field of product design. In the study, Kristav interviewed industrial designers and investigated their perspective on perceived authenticity. The study shows among others that originality was an important element when describing an authentic product, where one interviewee stated that "originality is when it is clear that it has not been copied, that is authenticity" [68, p. 136]. Other participants said that "the authentic product shall be based on an original idea and possess a certain level of material related quality and to be authentic is to be the pioneer with a new concept, a look, or a production method" [68, p. 136]. In addition, the importance of authentic honesty was stressed by the participants, where one interviewee pointed out that "the authentic product is honest in what it claims to be. If it looks like wood, but is not, well then it may be unauthentic" [68, p. 136].

Prior research [69] highlights the importance of transparency in shaping consumers' perceptions of authenticity. The authors underline the importance of transparency in brand communication. When brands are transparent with their production and production costs, consumers will be more likely to perceive that brand as authentic. Transparency also has a positive impact on consumers' attitude, trust and behavioral intention towards a brand.

2.8.5 Perception of AI-Generated Content in Terms of Authenticity

Farooq and de Vreese [70] conducted a study where they examined how aesthetic realism and emotional salience, which are found in AI-generated content and disinformation, can influence how authentic AI-generated disinformation images are perceived. In the study, 292 participants from the UK were shown both AI-generated and non AI-generated disinformation images. The images differed regarding how realistic and aesthetic they were. The results indicated that the participants viewed the realistic AI-generated images as authentic, they were however not so confident in their answers. Images that appeared less realistic often had unnatural details, which may have contributed to participants noticing they were not real images. Emotional salience did not have a significant impact on the participants' judgement. The results also revealed that the participants were more prone to rely on AI detection tools when AI-generated images seemed realistic, this was common when the participants were uncertain about their own judgement. The study also highlighted that trust in AI plays an important role in how participants used AI detection tools. Those participants that had a positive approach towards AI were more prone to change their judgement based on the AIs assessment. In comparison, those who had a negative approach towards AI were less prone to rely on the AI detection tool and relied more on their own judgement.

Pawelczyk et al. [71] conducted a study where they investigated how labeling AI-generated content can influence users' perception of authenticity on social media. The results of the study shows that labeling AI-generated images notably reduces the perceived authenticity compared to unlabeled images. The study also found a spillover effect, meaning that seeing AI labels later had an influence on how the participants judged the images that were not labelled. This indicates that the exposure to labeled AI-generated images affected how authentic participants perceived other images that were not labeled to be.

2.8.6 Authenticity and Human Involvement

A study conducted by Lee and Kim [72] explored the extent to which clothes designed by AI are perceived as authentic, through three online experiments. The findings of the study indicated that consumers generally respond more positively to human-designed clothes compared to clothes designed by AI, and clothes designed by AI were perceived as less authentic. Additionally, the findings showed that the negative perception of AI-designed clothes can be reduced if the consumers have the opportunity to give input to customize the design, since it enhances the perceived authenticity. Thus, Lee and Kim concluded that AI customization, which is a process where AI creates a design on the basis of a consumers' real-time personalization of their product design, increases the perceived authenticity.

Furthermore, in a similar study, Brüns and Meißner [11] highlight how the utilization of GenAI for content creation within the field of social media, diminishes the perception of brand authenticity. However, the results indicated that the followers'

concerns decreased when GenAI assisted rather than automated the content creation. In addition, Brüns and Meißner highlight with their study, from a perspective of consumer behavior, that social media followers appreciate human involvement.

Sultana et al. [73] conducted a study where they examined how visible effort cues influence perception of authenticity and value in human versus AI-generated creative work. The study's findings indicated that visible human effort in creative work received the highest average rating among participants. The participants in the study appeared to put more value into signs of human effort, imperfections, intention and emotional sincerity than whether the work was created by GenAI or human.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Kim et al [74] it is demonstrated that souvenirs designed by AI were perceived as less authentic than human-designed souvenirs. Furthermore, ChatGPT was used as a tool to create the souvenir designs. However, the study's findings showed that negative effects of AI-designed souvenirs can be mitigated by using verification cues. The usage of verifications cues also led to enhanced perceived authenticity of the AI-designed souvenirs.

3

Methods

This chapter presents the methodological approach applied in this study and describes how the research was conducted. The chapter presents the chosen research method, the data collection process, participant selection, interview procedure and data analysis method. Furthermore, this chapter also presents and discusses ethical considerations relevant for this study.

3.1 Data Collection

3.1.1 Qualitative Study

In order to carry out this work, a qualitative and exploratory study was conducted to collect and analyze data needed to answer the study's research questions. A qualitative approach according to Hammarberg et al. [75] is a method used to answer questions regarding experience, meanings and perspectives. Oranga and Matere [76] highlight how a qualitative approach facilitates rich and complex understanding of a specific context or phenomenon. Moreover, Lim [77] also discusses the strengths of qualitative research. The author emphasizes that it has the ability to generate rich contextualized insights resulting in it offering a human-centered understanding of the world. It is further argued that methods such as interviews allow researchers to dive into experiences and perspectives of individuals. This helps facilitate an environment where participants' voices are truly heard and recognized, where their perspectives and experiences are valued. In addition, the author also highlights how qualitative research also has a holistic perspective, meaning it aims at phenomena from all perspectives and how they are connected. This approach is also very flexible, allowing for adjustments based on new insights and data.

All of these benefits formed the basis for our choice of this approach. Qualitative research allowed us to explore how designers and users perceived GenAI and its impact on a company's authenticity in depth. While a quantitative approach has its strengths, such as generalization and scalability, it is not a fitting approach for this study. Lim [77] emphasizes that it has restricted contextual understanding and can fail to notice important details, which can influence the richness and understanding of findings. This approach can also tend to oversimplify complex phenomena, resulting in essential and detailed insights getting lost. Additionally, it lacks flexibility, not allowing for much change once the data collection has begun.

In-depth and rich insights rather than numerical measurement was required in order to answer the studys research questions. It was important to capture the complexity of designers and users' perceptions of GenAI, diving into their experiences and perspectives. This facilitated a deep understanding and gave us a holistic view. Moreover, the flexibility of this approach allowed us to adjust based on emerging findings and include unexpected perspectives into our study.

3.1.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The qualitative research method conducted in this study was semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews typically involve open-ended questions that are broad and guiding, they can for example begin with "Tell me about" which aims to encourage descriptive responses and stories among the participants [78]. This method allows the interviewer to explore the participants' perceptions and experiences in depth while still following a prepared interview guide to ensure all topics are covered. However, it still allows for flexibility and lets the participants elaborate freely and the interviewer to dive deeper into responses and follow up on emerging themes [77].

As mentioned before, this research aimed to explore rich and detailed insights rather than standardized responses. The conducted semi-structured interviews helped the participants to elaborate their experiences, feelings, perspective and thoughts on GenAI on a deeper level. This provided the research with reflective responses and captured valuable and nuanced insights that may not have been possible with another method. The flexibility in these types of interviews was also very beneficial since it allowed for a structure and a guide for what vital topics needed to be covered. In addition, it enabled spontaneous follow-up questions based on the participants' responses. This is also one of the reasons why fully structured interviews were not chosen, since according to Mueller and Segal [79] these types of interviews have a very strict format and contain fixed questions. This strict approach would not have allowed for the same flexibility and the ability to follow up on unexpected answers.

However, semi-structured interviews also have limitations which were considered before the interviews began. It can, according to Lim [77] be time-consuming to conduct these types of interviews due to the need for proper preparations, conducting them and later analyzing the result. This method also depends a lot on the participants, because not all interviewees make great participants [80], [81]. It can be difficult to interview some participants and engage in a good conversation with them. Some participants may be hesitant to share personal or sensitive information. This can cause difficulties for the interviewer due to not being able to ask follow-up questions, failing to listen actively and not being prepared with a good interview guide [82].

3.1.3 Selection and Participants

It is important to select suitable participants for a study to improve the quality. The data's credibility and richness gets influenced by the participants of the study.

Non-suitable participants can result in methodological gaps and less reliable study findings [83]. Due to this, a decision was made to select designers and users as participants for the study. Designers and users were considered suitable participants because this research aimed to understand how the use of GenAI affects a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of designers and users. The study included eleven participants in total, five designers and six users. Attempts were made to recruit a larger number of designers to enhance the strength of the study. Multiple companies were contacted with the aim to reach out to a larger group of designers. However, the response rate was very low which affected the final number of designers. The total number of participants (n=11) were considered appropriate for this study considering time limitations and advice from the supervisor. It was also taken into account that due to the small sample size, the results cannot be generalized.

The sampling methods that were applied for this study are simple random sampling and purposeful sampling, specifically criterion sampling. Simple random sampling is a method where every member of a population has equal probabilities of being selected for a study [84]. Purposeful sampling is a method where participants are selected based on knowledge or experience with an interest or phenomenon [85]. The participants selected based on this method are the ones the researchers believe will support the study the most [86]. Criterion sampling is a type of purposeful sampling [87]. Criterion sampling is a sampling method that selects people based on preselected criteria that is essential for the studys purpose [88].

The motivation to apply these two sampling methods is because the participants consisted of both designers and users. Purposeful sampling method was applied when finding designers and simple random sampling method was applied when finding users. When finding designers for the study, it was essential for them to meet some specific criteria based on knowledge or experience. It was crucial that they were, for example, either interaction designers, web designers, or UX designers. Another key criterion was that these designers used GenAI in their design process. These criteria excluded designers who did not incorporate GenAI in their design process. However, the users did not need to meet any prior criteria and every member had equal chances to be selected for the study. No specific exclusion was applied for users.

Designers were found by a combination of internal and external outreach. Internally designers employed at Queenslab were asked if they were interested and had time to participate in a semi-structured interview. However, due to the restricted number of eligible designers available at Queenslab, a decision was made to reach out to designers employed at external companies. This decision was made in order to ensure that the study included a sufficient number of designers. As a result, three designers were found from Queenslab and two designers from a Swedish IT/tech company. Users for the study were found by asking employees at Queenslab and a Nordic tech company if they were interested and had time to participate. Finding users was very convenient since the necessary number of users was attained effectively due to not needing to meet any specific criteria. Every participant was booked to a date that fitted them and were sent a formal invitation through email that included

date, time, place and a short description of the study.

Participant ID	Role	Requirements
D1	Designer	Uses GenAI in design process
D2	Designer	Uses GenAI in design process
D3	Designer	Uses GenAI in design process
D4	Designer	Uses GenAI in design process
D5	Designer	Uses GenAI in design process
U1	User	No specific requirements
U2	User	No specific requirements
U3	User	No specific requirements
U4	User	No specific requirements
U5	User	No specific requirements
U6	User	No specific requirements

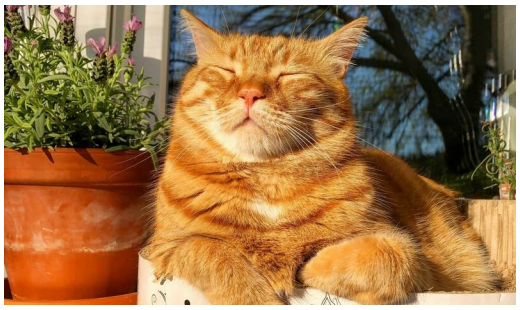
Table 3.1: Overview of study participants

3.1.4 Procedure of Interviews

Before any data collection began, two interview guides were prepared, one interview guide adjusted for designers and the other one for users (see Appendix B). As a result of deciding to conduct semi-structured interviews, it was necessary to create interview guides that consisted of open-ended questions. The prepared open-ended questions aimed to explore rich and detailed insights from the participants, while still following the prepared interview guides to guarantee that all essential topics were covered. Although designers and users had different interview guides, they consisted of a few similar questions that covered the same topic from different perspectives. Due to the flexible nature of semi-structured interviews, some of the questions were naturally answered through the participants spontaneous answers. During the semi-structured interviews, the participants also took part in a picture element activity that intended to encourage discussion regarding AI-generated content. During the picture element, the interview participants were shown two pictures at the same time (see Figure 3.1). One image had been AI-generated using Google Gemini and the second image was a non-generated picture retrieved from Google images. The participants were asked to guess which picture was AI-generated and which one was not while expressing their thoughts and ideas aloud at the same time. The picture element consisted of two rounds, the first round included images of cats and the second included images of houses. The idea and purpose of this activity was to encourage spontaneous reflections and discussions regarding AI-generated images and how the participants perceived them.

Conducting the semi-structured interviews in a calm, comfortable and controlled environment was a priority. Due to this, a decision was made to conduct them at Queenslab. Rooms were booked to ensure that the semi-structured interviews were not interrupted by external distractions and to assure that the participants were able to have full focus during the whole interview. Prior to initiating any semi-structured interviews, each participant was informed about the ethical considerations such as

AI-generated cat



Real cat

AI-generated house

Real house

Figure 3.1: Image pairs presented to participants during the picture element activity.

anonymity, confidentiality, privacy, voluntary participation and option to withdraw from the interview if they wanted to. Furthermore, they were also informed about the study. The participants were provided with all of this information through an information sheet and consent form. Each semi-structured interview lasted approximately between 45-60 minutes and were recorded for transcription purposes.

3.2 Data Analysis

3.2.1 Thematic Analysis

When all of the semi-structured interviews were conducted, a thematic analysis of the data began. Thematic analysis [89] is a method used to identify, organize and report patterns (also known as themes) in qualitative data. A theme captures data that is considered important and that is related to the research question, and represents a recurring pattern or meaning in the data set. Thematic analysis provides a structured way to organize and describe data in depth. It consists of six phases: “familiarizing yourself with the data”, “generating initial codes”, “searching for themes”, “reviewing themes”, “defining and naming themes” and lastly, “producing the report”.

The first phase “familiarizing yourself with the data”[89] emphasizes the importance of immersing oneself in the collected data to the extent where one is familiar with the breadth and depth of the output. Immersion refers to “repeated reading” of the collected material, and one reading the data in an active way, meaning seeking for

patterns, meaning or similar. Furthermore, it is recommended to read all the data at least one time before beginning with the coding, since the identification of possible patterns and ideas will start to take shape. Moreover, Braun and Clarke explains that verbal data such as interviews, must be transcribed into written words before conducting the thematic analysis. Therefore, all the semi-structured interviews in this study were transcribed manually by us without using any AI transcription tool. Riessman [90] explains how transcription is a good way to get acquainted with the data. Lapadat and Lindsay [91] explains how one will develop a deeper understanding of the collected data by transcribing it. Once we completed the transcription process, the transcribed material was read through repeatedly in order to get familiarized with the data. During the familiarizing phase, comments, reflections and initial thoughts regarding meaning and patterns within the collected data were also noted down.

The second phase "generating initial codes" [89] starts when one has read and familiarized oneself with the data, and when a list including ideas of what the data contains and what ideas are considered interesting, is generated. In this phase, initial codes from the data will be developed. Codes identify a feature of the collected data, and Boyatzis [92] explains codes as "The most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" [92, p. 63] Furthermore, Tuckett [93] underlines the importance of coding and explains that during the coding, one is organizing data into meaningful groups. Moreover, Braun and Clarke [89] highlights different approaches to coding extracts, which can be performed either manually or with the help of a software programme. If one is coding manually, the data can be coded by writing notes on the text one is analyzing. This can be done by using colored pens or highlighters to underline potential patterns. It is also possible to use post-it notes to enable identification of segments of data. In this study, the generating initial codes process was conducted manually in Google Documents by coloring and highlighting important parts related to the research questions and that overall were found very interesting. We first coded one semi-structured interview together to establish a shared understanding of the coding process. After that, the remaining semi-structured interviews were divided among us and each of us coded five semi-structured interviews individually. The initial coding was mainly based on the collected data, but relevant theories were also helpful in understanding some parts of the data.

The third phase "searching for themes" [89] begins when the raw data has been initially coded. This phase entails sorting codes into potential themes and gathering all the relevant data extracts within the themes that have been identified. In essence, the goal is to analyze the codes and think about how different codes may be merged to create an overarching theme. It is recommended to use visual representations when analyzing, for instance mind maps or write the name of the codes on paper notes and afterwards try to place the notes in different theme-piles. In this phase some of the codes will create "main themes" and others "subthemes" within each main theme. In addition, some codes may be considered difficult to merge with a specific theme and some codes may be discarded. If a code cannot be merged with a theme, it is permitted to create a theme called "miscellaneous" temporarily. In

this study, we looked for repeated keywords, similarities and patterns in the coded material to identify connections between different codes. Codes that had similar meaning or topic were grouped together into potential themes and subthemes.

The fourth phase "reviewing themes" [89] begins when a set of potential themes has been developed, and the phase includes a refinement of these themes. Braun and Clarke explains how some themes may merge into one and the same theme, while other themes need to be divided into separate themes, while other themes are no longer considered themes. Additionally, two levels of reviewing and refining themes are highlighted. The first level refers to refining the coded data extracts, including reading all the data extracts belonging to each theme. It is important to consider if the extracted codes seem to create a coherent pattern. If the theme is considered to form coherent patterns, one should enter the second level. However, if the themes are not considered to form coherent patterns, one needs to think about if the themes themselves are not suitable or if some of the extracted codes do not belong to a theme. The second level means that one is considering the validity of an individual theme in relation to the whole data set, and to determine whether the candidate thematic map is accurate or not. In this study, we regularly went back to the transcriptions and coded material to ensure that the themes and subthemes reflected participants' experiences and thoughts. Some subthemes emerged into themes because they overlapped each other and had similar meanings.

The fifth phase "defining and naming themes" [89] begins when a desired thematic map has been created. This phase involves a definition and further refinement of themes, and an analysis of the data within the code. Define and refine refers to the identification of a themes essence of what a theme concerns. It also refers to one deciding what aspect of the collected data each theme captures. Moreover, Braun and Clarke explains how an analysis for each theme needs to be conducted and written. In addition to this, it is important to reflect on how the themes relate to the "overall story". It is important to analyze the themes and how the themes relate to each other. Furthermore, the refinement contains an identification of potential subthemes within a theme. The usage of subthemes can be beneficial when one wants to create structure to large and complex themes. This phase also involves starting to reflect on the final names of the themes that will also be used in the final analysis. In this study, the themes and subthemes were named based on repeated patterns, shared meanings and common keywords. Some names were also influenced by findings from previous research and theory. It was also considered how the themes and subthemes connected to the research questions and overall purpose of the study.

The sixth phase "producing the report" [89] begins when a full set of themes has been developed, and includes a final analysis and write-up of the report. The purpose of the write-up in a thematic analysis "is to tell the complicated story of your data in a way which convinces the reader of the merit and validity of your analysis"[89, p. 17]. Furthermore, it is of value that the analysis provides a coherent, logical, concise, non-repetitive and interesting account of what the data is telling. The write-up needs to present enough evidence of the themes, i.e. through data extracts. In addition, the data extracts must be embedded within an analytic narrative which must make an argument concerning one's research question. In this study, quotes from both users

and designers were chosen because they were relevant and helped provide a better understanding of the participants' thoughts, experiences and opinions. The chosen quotes supported and helped strengthen the findings.

3.2.2 Types of Logical Reasoning

Patel and Davidson [94] explain how researchers strive to connect theory and reality, and underline how this is considered a problem in scientific work. In addition, Patel and Davidson highlight the three approaches deduction, induction and abduction which are used to relate theory and reality.

3.2.2.1 Deduction

A deductive approach means that conclusions about specific phenomena are drawn based on general principles and existing theories [94]. Hypotheses are derived from existing theory which will then be tested empirically. Patel and Davidson explain that this approach, i.e. the use of existing theories, means that the existing theory has determined what type of information should be collected, how the information should be interpreted and how the results should be related to the existing theory. Additionally, Patel and Davidson emphasize how the objectivity of the research is strengthened because the starting point is grounded in already existing theory. This is because the research is less influenced by subjective perceptions of the researcher. However, there is a risk that the existing theory that the researcher has chosen may influence the research and prevent new interesting findings from being discovered.

3.2.2.2 Induction

Applying an inductive approach means "following the path of discovery" [94]. In addition, an inductive approach means that the research object is studied without the investigation being anchored in previously existing theories. A theory is then formulated, based on the empirical evidence that has been collected. Furthermore, Patel and Davidson highlights that the risk with an inductive approach is that there is limited knowledge about generality, scope of the theory, time or group of people. In addition, the risk that the researcher's subjective perceptions may influence which theories will be developed is emphasized.

3.2.2.3 Abduction

Abduction is a combination of the approaches deduction and induction [94]. To work abductively means that a hypothetical pattern is formulated based on a single case first. This method demonstrates an inductive approach. Thereafter, the hypothesis or theory is tested on new cases and now a deductive approach is applied by the researcher. This allows for the development or expansion of the original hypothesis or theory, which can make it more general. Moreover, Patel and Davidson explain that an abductive approach does not "lock" the researcher, which they explain is what researchers risk doing in a deductive or inductive approach. However, Patel and Davidson argue that there are obvious risks with an abductive approach. Patel

and Davidson explain how all researchers are affected and influenced by previous research and experiences, and argue that there is a risk e.g., that the researcher unconsciously chooses the object of study based on previous experiences.

An abductive approach was applied during the thematic analysis in this study. The initial codes created during the early stages of the analysis were grouped and sorted in accordance with already existing theories and concepts collected in the literature review. This approach was used iteratively, since codes were reinterpreted and redefined as new insights emerged from the analysis and the interaction with existing theoretical frameworks.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

Laryeafio and Ogbewe [95] underline the importance of applying various ethical considerations when executing an interview in qualitative research. Laryeafio and Ogbewe highlights ethical considerations such as anonymity, privacy and confidentiality, voluntary participation and option to opt out, and explains how these must be considered by the researcher during the execution of the interview. Anonymity refers to the avoidance of collecting personal information about the interviewee [96]. In addition, Saunders et al. [97] clarifies how anonymity allows the interviewees to provide the researcher with information that ensures reliability of findings. Privacy and confidentiality means that the collected information from the participant needs to remain confidential and private, meaning no third party can access the raw data. Mumford et al. [98] underline the importance of voluntary participation in order to gain reliable information. Furthermore, Mumford et al. underline the importance of the option to opt out and says that the researcher must respect the participant's right to withdraw from the interview if they so wish.

Additionally, Laryeafio and Ogbewe [95] emphasizes the importance of assigning an information sheet and a consent form to the participants to read and accept before conducting the interview. An information sheet is a written document that contains a summary of the study and an explanation of how the interviewee will be affected by its participation in the investigation. Areas covered in the information sheet include e.g., the purpose of the study, how the information provided is processed and what will happen if the participants change their mind [99]. After the interview participant has taken part of the information sheet, the participant will sign a consent form [100].

Based on the literature, this study has applied ethical considerations such as anonymous participation where only information about professional role was documented. Moreover, privacy and confidentiality was applied, where the participant was informed that their raw data would only be processed by the researchers. Furthermore, the participants were told that their participation was voluntary and had the option to withdraw from the interview at any time. Moreover, the participants also signed a consent form and an information sheet, before the interview started.

Other aspects that the participant were informed about was that the study would be published at Chalmers University of Technology and outside the university boundaries. In addition, the participants were informed that their collected data would

only be processed within the time frame of the study and deleted afterwards. In addition, the interview participant was asked if it was okay to be audio recorded, to enable transcription. All of the semi-structured interviews were recorded using our personal phones after receiving consent from all of the participants. The recordings of the semi-structured interview were only accessible to us, this ensured confidentiality and secure handling of data. The semi-structured interviews were transcribed manually by us without any use of AI transcription tools.

4

Results

This chapter presents the findings from the conducted semi-structured interviews with users and designers. The collected data was analyzed through a thematic analysis which resulted in numerous themes and subthemes related to perceptions of GenAI, authenticity and the use of AI-generated content. The chapter is divided into themes from users and designers, followed by a comparison of similarities and differences between the two groups. An overview of the themes and subthemes is presented in Figure 4.1.

4.1 Users' Themes

This section presents the seven users' themes and related subthemes. An overview of the themes and subthemes are presented in Figure 4.1.

4.1.

Table 4.1: Overview of themes and subthemes identified among users and designers

Main Themes	Subthemes
Users	
Human Presence and Intention as the Foundation of Authenticity	• Human Touch/Human Flaws
Transparency and Honesty as the Foundation of Authenticity	• Disclosure of the Use of GenAI • Indicate Clear Authorship/Verification
Critical, Ambivalent and Context-Dependent Response to GenAI Content	• Skepticism and Judgment • Mixed Emotional Reactions • Context-Dependent
GenAI as a Tool Versus Human Replacement	• GenAI as a Supportive Tool • Impact on Creativity and Human Effort
GenAIs Impact on Brands and Brand Trust	• Trust and Credibility • Perception of Company Image and Seriousness • Brand Consistency
Ethical and Societal Implications of GenAI Use	• Automation and Societal Change • Efficiency vs Ethics
Indicators of Inauthenticity	• Too Perfect • Lack of Emotion, Human Flaws and Effort • Recognizable GenAI Style and Patterns
Designers	
GenAI as an Integrated and Transformative Tool	• Integration Across Different Design Stages • Efficiency and Workflow Optimization • Strategic and Organizational Implementation • Enhanced Capabilities
Enhancement of Creativity vs Constraint of Creativity	• GenAI as a Creative Partner • Risks of Generic Output vs Maintaining Originality • Overreliance and Skill Degradation
Human Expertise as the Foundation of GenAI Design	• Human Judgment and Verification of Output • Need for Domain Expertise
The Foundation of Authenticity	• Authenticity as Human and Intentional • Authenticity as Transparency, Disclosure and Trust • Authenticity as Feeling and Perception
Authorship, Ownership, and Ethical Considerations	• Ownership and Authorship • Ethical, Environmental and Societal Impacts • The Transformative Impact of GenAI on Designers
The Perception of Corporate Use of GenAI	• Transparency, Disclosure & Authenticity • Company Image • The Usage of GenAI vs a Brands Long-term Identity • Brand Consistency
The Perception of GenAI	• Attitudes Toward Using GenAI • The Perception of GenAI Content • GenAI's Ambiguous Impact on Authenticity

4.1.1 Human Presence and Intention as the Foundation of Authenticity

The first user theme is named "Human Presence and Intention as the Foundation of Authenticity". This theme presents how human presence, human emotions and flaws are critical for something to be perceived as authentic.

All users connected authenticity with human touch. Authenticity was described as something associated with a human rather than a machine. Several users (3 of 6) emphasized the importance of human touch and how minor flaws contribute to something feeling more authentic. This was something that U5 expressed during the first round of the picture element. U5 pointed out that the picture (see Figure A.2) had a lot of flaws which contributed to it being perceived as not GenAI. Likewise, U2

also highlighted that environmental flaws in the second round of the picture element (see Figure A.4)led to the picture being perceived as real. These imperfections were seen as a sign that the pictures were real and had a human presence behind them.

The first one has a lot of flaws in it, the cat is not looking at the camera, it's closing its eyes, dust on the plant, good reflection in the window in the trees behind it. I think the hair on the cat looks uneven, it is not perfectly cut.
- U5

This has been more lived in. More pictures of a real house. This is less unkept - not everything is clean and it looks like someone is actually living here.
- U2

Apart from human flaws and how it looked, authenticity was also associated with human connection and intention. All users expressed an essential need to have a human presence behind a message for it to be perceived as authentic.

If I read something I want to see a person on the other side, like a real person and not a machine.
- U4

Two users described the lack of human presence as reducing the value and importance of a message, stating that it is hard to connect with it knowing it is GenAI.

If it comes from a machine it doesn't have a person on the other end ... I don't find it has any value to me.
- U6

When I know it is AI it is harder to connect , especially if it is a human.
- U1

Additionally, several users stated the importance of human involvement when creating something to make something authentic. U1 underlined the importance of human touch and presence by expressing that you need humans in the loop to make it authentic. U5 expressed similar thoughts by stating that it needs to have humans in the loop to create something real.

Another important perspective of perceived authenticity was emotions in communication. U2 pointed out that a message is perceived as more authentic if it can convey emotions or feelings from the sender. According to U2, authenticity is connected to the capability to perceive an emotion in a message. Moreover, U2 also expressed that it is easier to identify with content when it conveys some type of emotion.

It feels authentic if I can tell there is an emotion or a feeling behind that, that someone wants to convey behind that message.
- U2

4.1.2 Transparency and Honesty as the Foundation of Authenticity

The second user theme is called "Transparency and Honesty as the Foundation of Authenticity" and consists of two subthemes: "Disclosure of the Use of GenAI" and "Indicate Clear Authorship/Verification". This theme describes how disclosure of GenAI use and clear authorship and verification of source has an effect on the participants perception of authenticity, credibility and trust.

4.1.2.1 Disclosure of the Use of GenAI

The majority of the users (5 of 6) viewed transparency and honesty as key factors for something to be perceived as authentic. They expressed the importance of companies communicating openly about their use of GenAI, emphasizing the value of being transparent and honest. U6 also highlighted the importance of having clear internal communication within the company regarding their use of GenAI, making it clear how they use it, how they don't use it and having clear ethical borders. Honesty and transparency can, according to U1 and U6, increase the trust for a company.

Yeah cause if they are being honest with by saying that they are using AI content or yeah if they are being honest, I feel like I can trust them.
- U1

Because it is transparent and it does not try to trick me.
- U6

Lack of transparency can reduce trust. U6 explained that seeing GenAI content without any clear disclosure of GenAI use can make them doubt whether they can trust the information or not. U5 explained that a lack of transparency resulted in them applying a more critical approach towards a content, examining whether it is GenAI or not. U6 also described transparency as making GenAI content in a way more acceptable, transparency can possibly in some cases even make GenAI content authentic.

Both U4 and U5 connected authenticity with honesty and expressing what you truly think and feel. U4 defined authenticity as saying your true thoughts without polishing the message. U5 emphasized that authenticity is about expressing something that aligns with ones feelings and thoughts.

U2 expressed how the disclosure of the usage of GenAI can increase a company's authenticity, however U3 did not share this view. U3 did not think the disclosure of GenAI usage affected how authentic a company felt.

I think there is a compliance part here as well [...] Either way is fine, it does not really affect my view of them being authentic.
- U3

4.1.2.2 Indicate Clear Authorship/Verification

The users shared similar views on the importance of having clear authorship or verifying the source of content, although some agreed stronger than others. All users thought that some kind of label or symbol that verifies who the author behind the content is could possibly enhance transparency and perceived authenticity. However, U4 pointed out that it could increase authenticity but it depends on what the symbol says. U1 compared the verification of the designer behind a content to art back in time, explaining that it could increase the authenticity because it is like a signature, emphasizing that it has another worth with a signature. Furthermore, U5 emphasized that they appreciate content ten times more when it has clear authorship and that it would increase the authenticity. While U5 expressed a significant difference, U3 expressed that it would probably increase the authenticity, but only slightly.

Increase because it is like a signature, like art back in timewith a signature it has another worth, its like if I see an art on the wall I want to know who did that.
- U1

U6 expressed concerns about not knowing the authorship behind a content. They described that they would be very disappointed if they read a book that later turned out to not have a human author, explaining that they would feel somewhat betrayed. Likewise, U2 highlighted the importance of being aware of who is behind a message, explaining that it is not about whether they can enjoy it or not if it is AI, but rather about wanting to know the source behind the message. Furthermore, U2 also brought up how something AI-generated can feel inauthentic because no one is behind that message.

4.1.3 Critical, Ambivalent and Context-Dependent Response to GenAI Content

The third user theme is called "Critical, Ambivalent and Context-Dependent Response to GenAI Content" and consists of three subthemes: "Skepticism and Judgment", "Mixed Emotional Reactions" and "Context-Dependent". This theme describes how users critically judge GenAI content, have different emotional reactions and how their reactions are affected by the context in which the GenAI content appears.

4.1.3.1 Skepticism and Judgment

The majority of the users (5 of 6) expressed an overall critical view of GenAI content, where skepticism and judgement were common. U2 and U5 explained how they initially react with skepticism and then later judge whether the quality is good or bad. U2 said that they also judge the necessity of GenAI use and also expressed having higher demands on GenAI content, whereas U5 judges and compares how good or bad the GenAI generated content is compared to reality. U2 further explained that they are concerned about being misled, explaining that they don't want to be tricked and that GenAI content can feel less authentic. However, at the same time U2 also

pointed out that the use of GenAI is not always negative and can have a positive judgement if it is used in a smart and efficient way. U4 conveyed a negative and critical view, explaining that GenAI content lacks effort and feels too easy. U3 and U6 stated that their response to GenAI content is based on the context and what type of content it is. U3 explained that their reaction depends on whether the GenAI content is in articles, blogs or social media. U6 expressed a mixed reaction towards GenAI content, both fascination and discomfort, explaining that content that is too perfect indicates that it is GenAI which reduces the trust. In contrast, U1 expressed that GenAI content does not affect how they receive the message.

Firstly skeptical then trying to like judge how good or bad it is compared to reality.
- U5

4.1.3.2 Mixed Emotional Reactions

The majority of the users (4 of 6) expressed mixed emotional reactions towards GenAI content, ranging from a positive to a negative scale. U1 described experiencing different emotions, both happiness and frustration. U3 explained that their reaction depends on what the context is. U4 had a negative reaction towards GenAI content, particularly GenAI pictures on LinkedIn. U6 expressed a mixed reaction on GenAI content, explaining that it can feel both fascinating and uncomfortable.

Sometimes I am happy, sometimes I get frustrated.
- U1

4.1.3.3 Context-Dependent

Some users (3 of 6) emphasized that their view on GenAI content was based on the context. U3 stated that their perception is affected by where the content appears, giving articles, social media and blogs as examples. Similarly, U5 expressed that their reaction depends on what company it is and how the content is presented. U6 pointed out what type of content it is, such as image or video influence their perception.

4.1.4 GenAI as a Tool Versus Human Replacement

The fourth user theme is called "GenAI as a Tool Versus Human Replacement" and consists of two subthemes: "GenAI as a Supportive Tool" and "Impact on Creativity and Human Effort". The theme reveals how GenAI is perceived as a tool that supports human thinking rather than replacing it. Furthermore, GenAI is described as both beneficial for creativity by enabling an improvement of ideas and at the same time challenging due to it reducing originality, sparking concern regarding less human effort and uniqueness.

4.1.4.1 GenAI as a Supportive Tool

The majority of the users (4 of 6) described GenAI as a supportive tool. They stressed that GenAI can be used as a tool to support human thinking and work

rather than replacing it. U1 highlighted how GenAI can enable efficiency, explaining that one employee will do the work of five people. Furthermore, U1 stressed that GenAI should be used as a tool.

It should be a tool, it shouldn't be a quick fix because you don't have the brains to do your job as a human. AI works for us, we don't work for AI [...]
- U1

U3, U4 and U6 described GenAI as just a tool, U3 elaborating that it can be used to gather more background and help give second hand opinions. U3 also stated that learning how to use GenAI tools can have a good effect on the output. U4 emphasized the importance of keeping your own thinking and identity and only using GenAI tools in certain areas and not all the time.

4.1.4.2 Impact on Creativity and Human Effort

All six users talked about how GenAI affects creativity and human effort, having different views on its limitations and benefits. U1, U2, U3, U4 and U6 highlighted how GenAI has its limitations in creativity, U1 and U6 elaborating how GenAI is not original and innovative and that it builds on existing information. U2 expressed concerns about how GenAI content over time can become less original due to models being trained on outputs from other models. U1 also highlighted how humans are more innovative than GenAI, explaining that humans have the ability to feel, smell, and taste while GenAI only can listen and read. Furthermore, U1 stressed the importance of using GenAI in a collaborative way, it can otherwise threaten the uniqueness. U4 talked about how GenAI's effect on creativity depends on how it is used. U4 highlighted that if it is used without human thinking it can lead to worse results, however if GenAI is combined with human input and good prompts it can be beneficial. U3 discussed how GenAI templates can sometimes make designs appear less original, giving loveable websites as an example. Explaining that human effort that is aligned with brand language increases originality.

Because an AI will never create anything new or original. It is in its nature to take something that is already there and make a new version of it
- U6

At the same time, U5 and U6 viewed GenAI as a tool that can help support creativity. U5 explained that GenAI can help make someone's thoughts and ideas clearer. U5 further explained that GenAI can make creativity more accessible, stating that people that don't have a creative side get the opportunity to also be creative, explaining that the gap between designers and non-designers is getting reduced. U6 expressed how it can help make people express themselves better.

4.1.5 GenAI's Impact on Brands and Brand Trust

The fifth user theme is called "GenAI's Impact on Brands and Brand Trust" and consists of three subthemes: "Trust and Credibility", "Perception of Company Image and Seriousness" and "Brand Consistency". This theme explores how the usage of GenAI affects a brand's trust, credibility, image and consistency. The insights show

that GenAI can both positively and negatively affect how a brand is perceived depending on how it is used. Even though it can support consistency it can also raise concerns regarding trust and originality.

4.1.5.1 Trust and Credibility

All of the users expressed that the use of GenAI can have an effect on a brand's trust and perceived credibility. U2, U4 and U6 explained that when they can see clear noticeable use of GenAI, particularly when it is overused, it can reduce trust. U2 explained that seeing visible GenAI content on billboards, banners or web for instance can result in their previously established trust for that brand being reduced. U6 described seeing a lot of GenAI images on a website would make them trust that brand less, unless they are open with it. U6 gave an example of a situation where GenAI images on a website reduced their trust in the information, even though the information itself was probably correct. However, U6 expressed that they can trust a company that uses GenAI if they do it in a sensible and balanced way. U4 added that trust for a brand gets affected negatively when they can effortlessly spot the use of GenAI pictures in a boring way. U4 further explained that the wrong usage of GenAI can also result in them losing a bit of trust.

When it has been used in the wrong way, it looks too easy, you kind of lose a bit of trust.
- U4

At the same time, some users (3 of 6) emphasized that trust depends on how GenAI is used. U1 noted that a brand's use of GenAI can affect trust, especially when it is in areas such as news and politics. U1 further explained that it depends on for what reason they use it. U1 also highlighted that transparency and honesty can increase trust. U3 said that the effect on trust depends on the company. U3 explained that if the company wants to be viewed as an AI forward thinking company, the usage of GenAI can then be positive and it shows that the brand knows how it works. However, using too much GenAI can become negative and make the main message unclear. Likewise, U5 also stated that trust depends on the company and how the GenAI is presented. They explained that they tend to be more critical towards the company if they push content and claim it to be real and not GenAI.

4.1.5.2 Perception of Company Image and Seriousness

All users expressed that the usage of GenAI can affect a company's perceived image and seriousness. When asked about how they perceive a company that encourages its employees to use GenAI, all users expressed positive views. U1 described such companies as being *at the forefront*, emphasizing that these companies are following the development. U3, U4 and U5 expressed that they perceived that company in a positive and good way, U4 expressing further that everyone should do it. U2 and U6 also thought it was something positive but emphasized that it is important to use GenAI in a responsible manner, not to penalize it and use it naively.

U1 emphasizes that the perception of a company's seriousness depends on the con-

text and industry. When GenAI is used in areas such as public sector, news and politics, the company can be perceived as less serious. U1 also explained that a perception of a company's seriousness can decrease when GenAI is overused in a more professional context, such as in the public sector. U1 explained that seeing GenAI used in a contract would create a feeling of frustration and lead to them perceiving the public sector as very unserious. U3 emphasized that if you want to be perceived as an AI forward thinking company, the usage of GenAI can be positive and it shows that the brand knows how it works. However, using too much GenAI can become negative and make the main message unclear.

When asked about how GenAI influences how long-term and stable the brand appears, the users expressed different views. The majority of users (5 of 6) expressed a negative view on the matter, except for U4 who did not have a clear opinion on it. U1, U2 and U6 emphasized some potential challenges. U1 discussed how a company that heavily relies on GenAI will lose its business core and will not be long-term, explaining that GenAI is changing everyday. U2 expressed that it can affect due to lack of consistency, explaining that a lack of guardrails can result in brand image being eroded due to brands not considering the impacts of GenAI outputs, focusing more on that it is *cool*. U2 further emphasized the importance for brands to go through additional steps to ensure how the use of GenAI affects the brands perceived authenticity. U6 also expressed concerns how the use of GenAI can affect how stable the brand appears, explaining that GenAI visual material is changing quite quickly unless they replace everything from time to time. U6 highlighted how this may make the brand appear less consistent. U3 expressed that GenAI's impact on how stable and long-term a brand appears depends on brand strategy, for instance a company that is being compliant and one that is not.

Like the visual material that AI is creating is changing quite quickly [...] And that would not feel like a stable brand unless they replace everything from times to times. But I doubt that a brand would feel consistent if you keep redoing it with GenAI.
- U6

In contrast, U5 expressed a positive view, stating that GenAI can help companies to stay committed to their long-term goals by supporting consistent content creation.

When asked about whether they feel a company that uses GenAI acts more or less ethically towards both employees, customers and society, the majority of the users (4 of 6) expressed different views. U1 expressed that companies that rely on GenAI for everything can feel fake and not really aligned with exceptions, emphasizing how it influences how serious a company is perceived. U1 described these companies as a *quick money bank kind of company* that is focused more on quantity over quality. U2 expressed that it can blur the lines, erode trust and displace people from their workplace. U2 further explained that claiming to have ethical guardlines would erode the trust because it is not possible for companies to know how large language models operate. U6 expressed that they would be a little prejudiced towards companies that use GenAI, expressing that they would *distress their ethics* based on the fact that they use a lot of GenAI. However, U6 did also emphasize that the use of GenAI

does not necessarily mean that the company does not act ethically, explaining that it can simply be used as a tool without the intention to fool anybody.

However, U3 emphasized a more neutral view, explaining that their ethical perception depends on how GenAI is perceived, since it is essentially a tool and the output could still be the same.

When asked about whether the usage of GenAI threatens the uniqueness of a company and designers, users expressed different views. U1, U2 and U6 viewed the usage of GenAI as a threat. U2 explained that it will lead to less originality and stated that they could already see that it is becoming more and more blended. U6 expressed that GenAI can never be new and original, explaining that it is in its nature to take something that already exists and make a new version of it. U3 and U4 had a more neutral view regarding it being a threat, U3 explaining that it in some way can be a threat. U3 gave lovable websites as an example, stating that all websites that use those templates look the same, emphasizing that they will be perceived as *quite bad and unoriginal*. U4 explained that it depends on how you use it, if you use it as a tool or if you try to solve every problem with it. U5 did not consider GenAI as a threat to companies or designers.

4.1.5.3 Brand Consistency

Users expressed different views when asked about a brand that claims to be original and innovative, and whether their use of GenAI reflects its stated beliefs, values and principles. U1 emphasized the importance for a brand to balance GenAI with human input, expressing that GenAI is good until 80% and that the remaining 20% needs to have humans in the loop. U1 explained that relying too much on GenAI will result in the brand's uniqueness being reduced, stating that GenAI is not innovative as it is built on previous data. U1 also highlighted that having GenAI as business core is not sustainable and long-term, however the company benefits more if they use GenAI as a tool to be more efficient. U2 expressed that it depends on what kind of company it is, if their field is in GenAI or not. Meaning that it is acceptable for those companies that work directly with GenAI to claim to be innovative and original. However, if a company outside this field claims the same thing while relying on GenAI, it can reduce their credibility. U3 had a more neutral view on the matter, stating that the company does not need to have something to do with GenAI. Likewise, U4 expressed that there is no problem between the usage of GenAI and being innovative, stating that the beliefs are still the same. On the other hand, U6 stated that when the use of GenAI is too obvious it can reflect their values. U5 emphasized that a brand's stated beliefs, values and principles depend more on a company's actions rather than their usage of GenAI. Explaining that claiming to be innovative does not necessarily mean that they are.

Yes I don't think there is something wrong with that. I think the principles are the same. I don't see any conflict with using GenAI and saying that you are innovating.
- U4

4.1.6 Ethical and Societal Implications of GenAI Use

The sixth user theme is called "Ethical and Societal Implications of AI Use" and consists of two subthemes: "Automation and Societal Change" and "Efficiency vs Ethics". This theme looks into how users perceive ethical and social implications of GenAI. The insights show that GenAI can have both positive and negative societal effects. At the same time as it can reduce cost and increase efficiency, it also raises concerns regarding reduced jobs and ethics depending on how it is used and implemented

4.1.6.1 Automation and Societal Change

When it comes to automation and societal change, U2 and U5 expressed different views on how it affects the job market and the value of human work. U2 had a critical view on it, expressing concern that GenAI might replace *nice jobs* such as writers and animators stating that it is something negative. U2 further discussed whether GenAI is beneficial in workplaces, meaning that it can displace people at their workplace and reduce employment. U2 further explained that automation can lead to reducing traditional jobs where *they have one guy left prompting*. However, U5 expressed a more positive view on automation, highlighting increased efficiency and reduced costs. U5 took in consideration that fewer people may be needed less in some processes but viewed this as a more societal problem that needs to be solved rather than it being a negative impact from GenAI.

4.1.6.2 Efficiency vs Ethics

When asked about whether they feel a company that uses GenAI acts more or less ethically towards both employees, customers and society, the users expressed different views on the balance between efficiency and ethics. U1 and U3 viewed GenAI as a tool, further expressing that it can be a tool that enables efficiency. However, U1 stressed that using GenAI for everything can feel *fake* and using it as a business core is not long-term. U3 viewed it as just a tool and how you view it from an ethical point of view depends on how you look at it, explaining that the outputs could still be the same. U4 did not express any ethical issues with using GenAI. However U4 did highlight that the way GenAI is used matters, expressing that work can look *too easy* resulting in reduced trust. U4 used GenAI to write a book as an example, stating that it is the wrong way to use GenAI. U4 explained that if you put time and human effort into it, it is the right way.

U5 discussed that it depends on how GenAI is used. U5 gave an example of a company like Coca-Cola where a traditional commercial might cost 100 million and involve 200 people. Whereas today with the help of GenAI a commercial cost can land on 2000 dollars, spending less time and reducing costs without employing anybody. U5 viewed the increased efficiency and lower cost as something positive and acknowledged that fewer employees as a more societal issue on how to create more jobs in the world.

U2 and U6 expressed a more critical view concerning ethical considerations. U2

emphasized that GenAI can blur lines, erode trust, especially when companies claim to have ethical guardlines over systems they don't fully comprehend. U6 expressed that the usage of GenAI does not necessarily mean that the company is unethical but they would still be judged negatively based on the fact that they use GenAI. U6 also highlighted the importance of internal communication within the company on how they use GenAI and which ethical borders they have, setting up rules for the company.

4.1.7 Indicators of Inauthenticity

The seventh user theme is called "Indicators of Inauthenticity" and consists of three subthemes called: "Too Perfect", "Lack of Emotion, Human Flaws and Effort" and "Recognizable AI Style and Patterns". This theme explores how the participants identify GenAI content and what makes it feel inauthentic. The results indicate that participants connect authenticity with too perfect outputs, lack of emotion, human flaws, effort and recognizable AI style and patterns.

4.1.7.1 Too Perfect

During the picture element, the majority of the users (5 of 6) described the GenAI pictures as *perfect*. U1 explained that the picture was GenAI because it was too perfect. U2 resonated that the picture was GenAI because it is a little more perfected, expressing that GenAI adds in perfection. U4 also added that the pictures that were GenAI felt too perfect, further expressing that it also feels fake. U5 further emphasized that everything in the picture is perfect, explaining that it looks like a photograph session, the lighting and everything is perfect. U5 also explained that they could not find any flaws despite looking for it. U6 expressed that one of the GenAI pictures had *too high quality* and the other GenAI picture was more perfect compared to the non-GenAI picture. However, U3 did not directly state that the GenAI pictures were perfect but rather viewed one of the pictures as having *high definition*, comparing it to the real picture and describing that as one as *lower solution*.

This is a little more perfected. A little cleaner, the grass is cutted. Here something has been added. This looks more like AI generated [...] They add in perfection.
- U2

4.1.7.2 Lack of Emotion, Human Flaws and Effort

The collected data indicates that a lack of emotion, human flaws and efforts are indicators of inauthenticity. U6 described authenticity as something that has human effort and flaws in it. U6 further explained during the picture element that one of the reasons why one of the pictures was perceived as the GenAI one is due to the lack of human error. U5 also expressed during the picture element that they actively look for flaws when deciding whether a picture is GenAI or not. U4 stated that when they are exposed to content created by GenAI, they think it feels *a bit easy* explaining that there is no effort put into it.

U1 emphasized that you need humans in the loop to make a product or design authentic. U2 also expressed that authenticity is linked to human presence, explaining that something feels authentic if it has emotions or feelings behind it, emphasizing that GenAI feels inauthentic because *no one is behind the message.*

4.1.7.3 Recognizable GenAI Style and Patterns

The collected data also indicates that recognizable AI style and patterns are indicators of inauthenticity. U4 explained that you can easily spot that many websites today are GenAI , describing them as *great but great in the same way.* U3 also highlighted how many websites today that are based on the same technical standard which result in them looking similar, giving lovable websites as an example, U3 explained that it is easy to spot that they are GenAI and are for that reason perceived as *quite bad and un original.* U3 further emphasized that when there is more effort put into the design work it will be original and more aligned with the *brand language.*

4.2 Designers' Themes

This section presents the seven designers' themes and related subthemes. An overview of the themes and subthemes is presented in Figure 4.1.

4.2.1 GenAI as an Integrated and Transformative Tool

The first designer theme is called "GenAI as an Integrated and Transformative Tool", and consists of the four subthemes "Integration Across Different Design Stages", "Efficiency and Workflow Optimization", "Strategic and Organizational Implementation" and "Enhanced Capabilities". The collected data clearly shows how GenAI is considered to be an integrated tool that is applied by the designers in their design process. In addition, the usage of GenAI is perceived to enable efficiency in the work process, the implementation of GenAI requires a strategic approach e.g. by introducing quality assurance, and lastly enhanced capabilities were experienced, including a faster and broader understanding of different problems.

4.2.1.1 Integration Across Different Design Stages

GenAI is an integrated tool that is applied by all of the designers in their design process. The majority (3 out of 5) of the designers said they use GenAI in all parts of the design process, including ideation, research phase, evaluation, iterating, planning, strategizing, reviewing and analyzing. Furthermore, D1 who stated that they used GenAI in the design process, but not in all phases, used it partially during the research process to find out how the design process should be structured. However, D1 underlined that the tool is never used to generate textual output. Moreover, it was found that D3 used GenAI in large parts of the design process, such as the research phase in order to gain a deeper understanding of a potential client. Additionally, GenAI was used to generate images and ideas. Furthermore,

D2 and D4 state that GenAI is integrated into their work to such an extent that they cannot imagine life without GenAI.

4.2.1.2 Efficiency and Workflow Optimization

All designers felt that using GenAI could enable efficiency in the work process. D2 explained that GenAI was partly used as an idea generator when the designer gets stuck in the work process but also to be able to work at a high pace. D2 exemplified this by explaining how the executing of strategic work before GenAI took weeks, but today with the help of GenAI, it takes approximately between one and two days. D2 also explained how the use of GenAI contributed to faster understanding in various areas. Furthermore, D4 underlines this by stating that the use of GenAI makes work more efficient by potentially saving time on tasks where there is a high risk of making mistakes. Moreover, D1 said that AI tools are advantageous for *cutting some corners*.

[...] at least then you have spent 30 seconds on it instead of a full afternoon and then you can spend some more minutes on understanding what the difference is, rather than on how you should do it in the first place.
- D4

In addition, D2, D4 and D5 explain how streamlining frees up time for other parts of the work process, including creating an understanding and a faster understanding for different problems. In addition, the designers reported that by streamlining their work, they could spend more time on what was considered more important, focusing more on making good design and spend time on something that GenAI might not be able to do.

4.2.1.3 Strategic and Organizational Implementation

All the designers emphasized the importance of a strategic and organizational implementation of GenAI. D1 and D5 explicitly expressed the importance of establishing a quality control or quality assurance, which means that before material is published, it must be checked. Additionally, D2 emphasizes the importance of someone validating the output generated by GenAI and D4 states that the material must be reviewed in advance to prevent *bullshit* from being released *in the wild*.

Proper quality assurance which means having processes, having roles and governance, and people in place to ensure that the thing that reaches the surface is consistent with the rules that you have set [...].
- D5

Moreover, D3 underlined the importance of having a plan regarding an implementation of GenAI, and believed that it was important not to carry out different tasks randomly, but according to plan. D3 also stressed the importance of discussing the plan within the company frequently. The idea of having a plan was also shared by D2, who argued that when GenAI is used, the plan must be followed. In addition, D2 stated that it is important to have an understanding of the field one is prompting about.

[...] you need to understand what you want to get out of it to work with it [...] So for example for us that works with UX or branding you need to understand the term of UX [...].
- D2

4.2.1.4 Enhanced Capabilities

The majority of the designers (3 out of 5) experienced enhanced capabilities. D2 experienced faster understanding when using GenAI and D5 experienced a broader understanding of different aspects of tasks. D5 explained that one is limited to ones own knowledge and experience, but that GenAI can supplement with information to create a more comprehensive understanding. Additionally, D5 expressed satisfaction with using GenAI as it adds new perspectives and ways of thinking, and suggestions of different approaches. Moreover, D4 claims that the usage of GenAI has expanded the participants capabilities to a large extent.

But if I trained the GenAI to use references from elsewhere or practices or whatever ... it tends to complete what I am trying to do with some additional questions or approaches.
- D5

[...] also it has expanded my capabilities a lot. E.g. I don't know anything about code. I like a nice clean UI to work with, I don't like code. But all of sudden I can [...] That opens a door in my head, I don't have to learn or know the code, I can express my intention to AI and that this is an issue for me and I need to resolve this [...].
- D4

4.2.2 Enhancement of Creativity vs Constraint of Creativity

The second designer theme is called "Enhancement of Creativity vs Constraint of Creativity", and consists of three subthemes "GenAI as a Creative Partner", "Risks of Generic Output vs Maintaining Originality" and "Overreliance and Skill Degradation". The theme reveals how GenAI is considered to be a good tool for idea generation, that GenAI content is considered generic and copied, and that there is a concern that an overreliance on GenAI e.g. could lead to a loss of independent thinking.

4.2.2.1 GenAI as a Creative Partner

GenAI was considered by all designers to be a good tool for generating ideas, where GenAI was considered an *idea generator* and a good tool to *bounce your thoughts and ideas with*. According to D3, with the help of GenAI, it is possible to converse with GenAI, exchange ideas and get inspiration. The majority of the designers (3 out of 5) stated that the utilization of GenAI was a good approach to planning and knowing what to do next.

The majority (4 out of 5) of designers experienced an increase in creativity when using GenAI, while D3 experienced both an enhanced and limited creativity. D1 likened the implementation of GenAI to *another stream of input* and said that different kinds of input are needed for creation. Furthermore, D4 said that an implementation of GenAI enhances creativity, but underlined the risk of getting *swept away in this whole thing*. D5 explained how the creativeness is enhanced, and emphasized that the creative process is more realistic, feasible and connected to the bigger picture.

[...] It enhances the creative process in a way so that it is more realistic and feasible and more connected to the actual bigger picture [...] So it allows me to be creative but still be reassured that it is within these guardsrales so to speak.
- D5

Moreover, D2 stated that GenAI enhances creativity, however D2 emphasized that GenAI does not help D2 to become more creative, but GenAI gives D2 time to become more creative. Furthermore, D3 experienced both an enhanced and limited creativity, and emphasized that with the help of GenAI, it takes less time to come up with an idea and to finalize an idea. In addition, D3 highlighted the importance of generating one's own ideas and to be a part of the creative process within the creative fields.

It can definitely enhance because it can be quicker to get an idea and to finalize an idea. But it can limit me in a way that as mentioned earlier, sometimes you need to do the slow work to get the result so yeah it can be both.
- D3

4.2.2.2 Risks of Generic Output vs Maintaining Originality

4 out of 5 designers experienced GenAI content as generic and copied, however D4 experienced GenAI content solely as generic. D2 described content generated by GenAI as generic and claimed that GenAI does not generate any cool ideas. D4 stated that GenAI is *mellanmjölk* and meant that GenAI *never brings anything new to the table*.

GenAI is mellanmjölk, anything that is given, it looks at patterns and it gives you the middle ground of that, it is never innovative and it never brings anything new to the table, maybe it is something new to your eyes but it is just the grey middle mismatch of whatever it has been fed.
- D4

In contrast, D5 admits that content created by GenAI is generic, however, D5 does not think that this is necessarily a bad thing and instead believes that it can be beneficial.

But I think that is one of the benefits, at least what I am doing, because I think good UX is relatable and recognizable and you should always try to avoid reinventing the wheel, so therefore generic is not necessarily negative [...].
- D5

Furthermore, there are divided opinions on whether the use of GenAI threatens the uniqueness of companies and designers or not. The majority of designers (3 out of 5) believe that it threatens the uniqueness, where D1 believes there is a risk. However, D1 emphasizes that there may also be a possibility to be unique. Additionally, D1 emphasizes how an output of an average decision creates an opportunity to be unique. In a similar way, D5 claimed that *originality can be elevated through the help of AI*. Moreover, D5 believed that usage of GenAI threatens the uniqueness of a company and designers, but underlined that it depended on how much one chose to include from the created content. Additionally, D5 stated that *uniqueness and originality comes from people*. Furthermore, D2 stated that everything created with GenAI looks the same.

Moreover, D3 and D4 believed that the use of GenAI did not threaten the uniqueness of companies and designers. D3 emphasized the importance of using GenAI in the right way and where it only serves as an aid. Furthermore, D4 explained that it all depends on how one chooses to apply it and highlighted the possibility to create something unique with GenAI, and exemplified with the first AI generated Coca Cola commercial.

4.2.2.3 Overreliance and Skill Degradation

The majority of the designers (3 out of 5) explicitly expressed a concern about how an overreliance on GenAI could lead to skill degradation. D4 expressed a concern that overreliance could result in a loss of independent thinking and a risk of limited creativity, to a certain extent. D4 also said that it is *very easy to get swept up*.

Cause there is of course some risk if you rely too much on GenAI you kind of lose the tricks of the trade and you don't really push yourself to be critical in your design work [...]
- D4

[...] If you just close your eyes and click a button and think that you are done, and that that was "quick and efficient" - yeah but you brought down your quality and your skill and your thinking.
- D4

Moreover, D1 expressed a concern about losing various skills and capabilities, and said that *we are handing over so much to tech bros*. Furthermore, D3 highlighted the importance of being a part of the creative process, including generating idéas and solving various problems, within the creative fields. D3 explained that this can create a sense of satisfaction and that an emotional relationship is almost created between the designer and the potential design problem. D3 explained that this could cause the designer to lose that experience.

4.2.3 Human Expertise as the Foundation of GenAI Design

The third theme is called "Human expertise as the Foundation of GenAI Design", and consists of the two subthemes "Human Judgment and Verification of Output" and "Need for Domain Expertise". The result indicates that human judgment and

verification of GenAI output is considered important, e.g. through quality assurance. Furthermore, domain expertise was considered important, in order to get good and relevant output from GenAI.

4.2.3.1 Human Judgment and Verification of Output

All the designers underlined the importance of human judgment and verification of GenAI output and content. D1 and D5 explicitly expressed the importance of quality control or quality assurance, which means that material to be published must first be reviewed. D1 also said *don't trust the tools to do quality control*. In addition, D5 emphasized *proper quality assurance*, and underlined having roles, governance and individuals ensuring output to be published is consistent with the rules established. Moreover, D5 emphasized the importance of training people to maintain a certain quality.

It was further revealed that D4 is very mindful when using GenAI and *not just taking it as it is*, and explained that when GenAI is used, D4 always goes back to the original data. Additionally, D4 underlined the importance of knowing the data in order to be able to trust the generated output. Furthermore, D2 and D3 stressed the importance of humans in the loop, and D2 explicitly stated that the validation must be done by a human.

4.2.3.2 Need for Domain Expertise

Some of the designers (2 out of 5), underlined the importance of domain expertise, in order to get good and relevant output from GenAI. Moreover, D2 said that it is important for someone working in the field of UX to understand the term of UX, in order to *know what to get out of it* and to know what is considered good and bad content. Additionally, D2 explained that it is of value to know how to ask GenAI and how to prompt and order from GenAI. In addition, D2 saw GenAI as a way to learn things faster.

> *I have been working with that for 25 years and I know what is good or not and what works or not. But maybe a junior designer comes in that hasn't worked a lot with logos or generated logo from AI, maybe not know if it is good or bad.*
> *- D2*

Furthermore, D1 stated that it is crucial with a skilled creator when using GenAI, especially during creation for something to be experienced as authentic.

4.2.4 The Foundation of Authenticity

The fourth theme is called "The Foundation of Authenticity" and consists of the subthemes "Authenticity as Human and Intentional", "Authenticity as Transparency, Disclosure and Trust" and "Authenticity as Feeling and Perception". The result indicates, for example, that humanity, intention, truthfulness, purpose and a feeling were important for something to be perceived as authentic.

4.2.4.1 Authenticity as Human and Intentional

The majority of the designers (4 out of 5) linked authenticity to something human. When the designers were asked to give their own definition of authenticity, D2 described it as *human, raw, real and not from AI*. However, D2 added that one can be a human and do something that is not considered authentic. Furthermore, D3 mentioned *humanity* when referring to authenticity and D1, D2 and D5 emphasized that *people are authentic not tools*, having *human in the loop* and having *people in place* who performs quality assurance, when answering the question what a company should consider when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic.

Moreover, the majority of the designers (3 out of 5) also meant that authenticity could be linked to intention. D1, D4 and D5 linked authenticity to intention, where D1 stated *maybe those who did this cared about it*. In addition, D1 asks itself, has a shortcut been taken, are the creators serious and has effort been put in, and concludes by describing authenticity in terms of *you get personality into it*. Furthermore, D5 defined authenticity as something that has been created with a sense of *awareness, mindfulness* and *purpose*.Furthermore, D4 explained that when prompting GenAI, it is important to prompt something of value. Additionally, D4 stated that publishing a *bullshit prompt* is not necessarily authentic and stressed that there is no intention, no follow up and no refinement, which D4 meant is the entire design process.

When it's created on the basis of its purpose. It needs to be evolved from an actual need, if we say a digital product [...] for me to make a digital product authentic you need to be able to point each design decision to a reason [...]
- D5

4.2.4.2 Authenticity as Transparency, Disclosure and Trust

Furthermore, the designers also linked authenticity to transparency, disclosure and trust, where D4 emphasized the importance of transparency. D4 stated that it would be good if one could *battle test* a design or product, and that *people can go in and check for themselves*. D4 exemplified with online clothing stores that reveal how the fabric has been produced, costs and so on. D4 also highlighted transparency as being important for companies to be perceived as authentic when using GenAI.

Moreover, D1 and D3 advocated trust. According to D3, regarding what makes a digital product or design authentic, the use of too many typical GenAI words leads to a decline in authenticity and trust in the company. Additionally, D1 stated that trust is a big factor for authenticity.

Further, 2 out of 5 designers thought disclosure and authenticity were linked. D2 thought it was important with disclosing and meant that it could be difficult to know which content is real and which is not, which D2 underlined was the authentic part. Furthermore, D4 shared the same view and stated that disclosure increases the level of authenticity. Moreover, D3 had a divided view on disclosing and stated that not disclosing the use of GenAI would possibly have increased the authenticity level a year ago. However, D3 said that there may soon come a time when it is

considered more professional to disclose the use of GenAI.

4.2.4.3 Authenticity as Feeling and Perception

Furthermore, the majority of the designers (4 out of 5) also described authenticity as a feeling and perception. Regarding the question of what makes a digital product or design authentic, D1 underlined the importance of *the tone of voice* and explained during the picture element, that a non-GenAI image felt more authentic and had a more *authentic feel*. Further, D2 stated that something is considered authentic when someone has *put their soul in the work*. Moreover, D3 said that something is considered authentic when it *comes across as real and genuine*, and *feels* authentic. D3 also explained that a product description that is written in a way that no human would write, makes the participant *wrecked* and is not considered authentic.

> *It is in many ways a feeling that something feels authentic, because we are so sensitive to things that are off.*
> *- D3*

Moreover, D5 defined authenticity, in terms of *something that is created with a sense of awareness, mindfulness and purpose*, and stated during the picture element that a non-GenAI image felt more authentic.

Furthermore, D4 defined authenticity as staying *true to your ideals and ethical guidelines* and staying *true to yourself to some degree*. However, D4 pointed out that both GenAI and humans carry many biases, and explained that even though one meets these requirements to be considered authentic, it does not mean that it is a good thing.

Regarding what a company should consider when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic, D3 emphasized the importance of having a plan that should be frequently discussed within the company, and also *not to just do things randomly*.

4.2.5 Authorship, Ownership, and Ethical Considerations

The fifth theme is called "Authorship, Ownership, and Ethical Considerations" and contains the subthemes "Ownership and Authorship" "Ethical, Environmental and Societal Impacts" and "The Transformative Impact of GenAI on Designers". The data indicates e.g. that there are divided opinions about whether the use of GenAI affected the designer's sense of ownership when designing or not. In addition, the data showed that designers experienced various ethical, social and environmental effects of GenAI, but also that the use of GenAI has affected designers' work processes in a number of different ways.

4.2.5.1 Ownership and Authorship

The majority of the designers (3 out of 5) did not think that the utilization of GenAI affected the designers sense of ownership when designing. D1, explained that the designer could not understand how responsibility for a design could be transferred to a tool. However, D1 conceded that the sense of ownership would have been affected

if textual output would solely have been produced by GenAI, and underlined the fact that *I am delivering something I am not 100% behind*. Moreover, D1 pointed out that if there were limitations in the design process, such as time constraints or requirements to apply a certain method, D1 might not be able to take responsibility for the quality. Additionally, D1 underlined how the designers sense of ownership would have been affected. Furthermore, D4 stated that if the output generated by GenAI is iterated, refined and reworked, the sense of ownership when designing is not affected, and asked what is then the difference between this and the tools in Photoshop. Additionally, D4 stated that the designer using GenAI is *still going into the procedure*. However, D4 conceded that the sense of ownership would have been affected if the designer would have accepted the first draft that GenAI created. Moreover, D5 viewed GenAI as a *sidekick* and explained how the designer is viewed as a decision maker over which output to keep from GenAI and which not to keep. Furthermore, D5 emphasized how the designer is the gatekeeper and the one who implements the solution.

Furthermore, 2 out of 5 designers said that the utilization of GenAI actually affected the sense of ownership when designing. However, D2 added that it also depends on how one asks the questions to GenAI, explaining how easy prompting results in mainstream output, but that *working* with GenAI and getting *back to it* means that the designer *orders* something from GenAI. Moreover, D3 explained how using GenAI led to the feeling that it is not entirely the designer's own work, but emphasized that GenAI has not been used in a process where the end product has been a design. In such a case, D3 believed, the sense of ownership might have been affected a little but not that much, and highlighted decision-making and said that design is very much about decision-making. Furthermore, D3 said that a decision can never be based on GenAI saying something has to be a certain way.

4.2.5.2 Ethical, Environmental and Societal Impacts

The majority of the designers expressed a concern regarding GenAIs ethical, environmental and societal impacts. Both D1 and D4 emphasized the environmental impact, including the use of water, electricity and energy, and D1 underlined the importance of learning how to use GenAI in the right way. Additionally, D4 stated that the concern is not necessarily apparent to the designer when sitting in front of the screen, but emphasized that the designer is well aware of it.

Furthermore, D4 said that GenAI carries a lot of biases, but so do humans. D4 explained that a designer can have an evil agenda regarding their design, explaining that a designer's ethical guidelines and ideals can be problematic, depending on who the designer is. Moreover, D4 thinks that ChatGPTs guidelines lean homophobic, and explained how the designer once had prompted a story about two men that had had a boxing fight, then grabbed a coffee and afterwards had held hands, to ChatGPT. However, it was not possible to create that story and ChatGPT had said that *this could be pointing to certain suggestive themes*. D4 found this problematic, and stated that ChatGPT would not have reacted in the same way if it had been a man and a woman.

I tried to lay out a story of two guys that had a boxing fight and then having a coffee and then afterwards holding hands. Fully clothed on the streets but I couldn't do that. Because then it was like "this could be pointing to certain suggestive themes", and I was what the fuck does that mean? And it keeps on saying "we support every type of lifestyle", but I was like this is bullshit, you would never have reacted if it would have a man and a woman holding hands walking down the street.
- D4

Furthermore, D2 said that GenAI will replace humans and take certain jobs. Moreover, D1 expressed a concern that the human is handing over their skills to the *tech bros*. Additionally, D4 expressed a concern referring to copyright.

4.2.5.3 The Transformative Impact of GenAI on Designers

All designers have experienced a transformation since the implementation of GenAI, where GenAI partially is seen as an integrated and transformative tool in the design process. GenAI is applied by all designers, and D4 explained how GenAI is implemented everywhere, including planning, strategizing, reviewing and analyzing. Further, D4 emphasized how GenAI is fully integrated into the work process, and how the designer *could not live without it now*. However, D4 highlighted how the designer is very *mindful* when reviewing the data. Furthermore D2 uses GenAI as an idea generator when the designer gets stuck in the work process. Additionally, D4 stated that the usage of GenAI may evaluate the designer. Furthermore, D4 discussed how the use of GenAI can result in a designer to trust GenAI as a creative creator instead of themselves and their skill set.

Moreover, all designers felt that using GenAI could enable efficiency in the work process, and D2 further explained that through this streamlining, the designer can instead focus more on more *important* tasks. Additionally, D5 expressed that the designer has gained a broader understanding of different aspects of tasks, and explained how the designer is limited to its own knowledge and experience, but GenAI allows for a broader understanding.

Furthermore, D4 had experienced a huge difference on many levels since integrating GenAI in the working- and design process. Although GenAI is integrated into D4's workflow, D4 explained that the designer still performs some manual tasks to prevent the risk of getting *swept off in the AI buzz*. Moreover, D3 explained how the designer has noticed that the expectations from clients are higher since integrating GenAI in the working- and design process, and underlined how society has *picked up that AI is a thing* and now means *you can just do that with AI can't you?* Furthermore, D1 had only experienced changes in parts of the process, and not in the general process. However, D1 emphasized that in the areas where GenAI has been used, the designer has experienced a change, but pointed out that the change is not as big as in visual design and content creation.

4.2.6 The Perception of Corporate Use of GenAI

The sixth theme is called "The Perception of Corporate Use of GenAI", and contains the subthemes "Transparency, Disclosure and Authenticity", "Company Image", "The Usage of GenAI vs a Brands Long-Term Identity" and "Brand Consistency" and explains how GenAI partially affects the image of the company, company voice, the perception of consistency and long-term identity.

4.2.6.1 Transparency, Disclosure and Authenticity

Regarding the question if disclosure of the usage of GenAI would affect how authentic a brand feels, D2 and D4 thought disclosure and authenticity were linked. However, D5 stated it would not affect the perceived authenticity, and D1 and D3 were unsure whether it would have an effect or not. Moreover, D2 thought it was important with disclosing and said that it could be difficult to know which content is real and which is not, which D2 underlined was the authentic part. Furthermore, D4 shared the same view and stated that disclosure increases the level of authenticity.

Moreover, D5 emphasized that it depended on how the company used GenAI, and distinguished between using GenAI as a tool and relying on GenAI.

> *If they use it as a tool to elevate what they are already doing then it is something you would expect. But if a company relies on GenAI to do less work or to make it easier to work, then it is another type of impression that I get.*
> *- D5*

Moreover, D3 had a divided view on disclosing and stated that not disclosing the use of GenAI would possibly have increased the authenticity level a year ago. However, D3 said that there may soon come a time when it is considered more professional to disclose the use of GenAI. Furthermore, D1 stated that the designer had not reflected on the issue to such an extent, but explained that the designer did not believe it would be a requirement to label GenAI content. Further, D1 stated that if a company is not transparent with its use of GenAI and gets caught, it will be a *huge blow* to the trust in the company.

4.2.6.2 Company Image

All designers had a positive attitude towards companies encouraging the designers to utilize GenAI. However, according to D1, D2 and D3 it was important to consider how the company encourages the use of GenAI, what the purpose of using GenAI is and to apply a strategic implementation of GenAI. Furthermore, D1 emphasized the importance of trying and exploring new things, and meant that if one doesn't do this, one won't evolve. However, D1 underlined the importance of considering *how* the company encourages the use of GenAI. Moreover, D2 explained that it is crucial to start applying GenAI and gain an understanding of how to work and not work with GenAI. However, D2 underlined the importance of considering what the purpose of using GenAI is. Additionally, D2 explained that the designer would be more worried if a company doesn't apply GenAI.

I think we are doomed if we don't start working with AI otherwise someone is going to run on the outside before you.
- D2

Moreover, D4 explained that the designer experiences such a company as *forward and right on the money*. D4 further said that a company that doesn't push GenAI, won't exist in a few years and underlined that there is a necessity. In addition, D4 stated that the designer views a company that does not implement GenAI as *conservative, backwards* and a company with *wrong priorities*. Moreover, D5 experienced a company that encourages the use of GenAI as a realistic company and that still wants to be part of *the race*. Furthermore, D5 said that if the designer had not been encouraged at the designer's current company, it would have been perceived as naive or lazy in the designer's opinion, and emphasized that it at least applied to companies in the field of IT. In addition, D5 underlined the importance of implementing GenAI, otherwise there is a risk of being outrun by a competitor that is using GenAI, which is aligned with D2s reasoning.

4.2.6.3 The Usage of GenAI vs a Brands Long-term Identity

Furthermore, regarding how the designer makes sure that the usage of GenAI is consistent with a brands long-term identity rather than short-term efficiency, the majority of the designers (4 out of 5) partially emphasized some type of strategic usage. D1 said that it can be tempting to cut corners due to time and financial constraints, and highlighted having a plan and not just hoping *for the quick win*. Additionally, D2, said that when a company creates different content, such as campaigns, it is important that they follow a plan and the brand. Furthermore, D3 also said that it might be tempting to use GenAI, and stressed the importance of ensuring that the use of GenAI aligns with the brand. D3 also suggested a possible introduction of *aligned sessions*, where it is ensured that everything goes right. Moreover, D5 accentuated to establish *solid instructions*, in the actual AI and in educative material for the employees. Further, D5 said if a company has a very specific long-term goal or identity, which is at risk of being compromised, it is very important to establish a framework, guardrails and rules. Furthermore, D4 stated that it is vital that the designer takes full ownership or responsibility for the use of GenAI, and said that content created by GenAI must be labeled. D4 did not believe that the use of GenAI would negatively impact a company, however, its use could have a negative impact if a company replaced its core product with one created solely by GenAI.

4.2.6.4 Brand Consistency

The majority of the designers (3 out of 5) believed that the usage of GenAI would make it easier to maintain a consistent company voice, while D1 said it would be harder and D3 thought it could be both easier and harder.

D2 thought that a utilization would make it easier, since there is an opportunity to *build* GenAI so that it contains a variety of data and information. D2 further explained that there is a risk of human error or that a new employee does not

understand the company voice yet, but that GenAI will do. However, D2 emphasized the importance of doing it right. Furthermore, D4 thought that a usage would make it easier, but explained that if one doesn't know how to use GenAI, the company voice will be killed. Additionally, D5 thought that a utilization might make it easier and explained that the use of GenAI can ensure that all content is expressed in the same type of way, no matter who is creating the content.

Moreover, D1 meant that a utilization would make it harder, since the tools used today to generate text and images are still very new. In addition, D3 said that a utilization would make it both harder and easier. Further, D3 highlighted that it can be a good idea to use GenAI when content, including text, images and articles, is produced by many different creators. D4 said that this poses a risk that it may be perceived as scattered. However, D4 emphasized that with the help of GenAI, it is possible to make the content more aligned and authentic. However, D3 argued that it still depends, but that the use of GenAI can be beneficial for this purpose if it is done correctly.

4.2.7 The perception of GenAI

The seventh theme is called "The perception of GenAI", and consists of three subthemes "Attitudes Toward Using GenAI", "The Perception of GenAI Content" and "GenAIs Ambiguous Impact on Authenticity". This theme explores how designers perceive the integration of GenAI in their work, including designers' perceptions of creativity, authenticity and GenAI content.

4.2.7.1 Attitudes Toward Using GenAI

There were divided opinions about the perception of GenAI. Regarding whether the designers preferred to use GenAI or not, the majority of the designers (3 out of 5) explicitly expressed that they preferred to utilize GenAI. D2 said *I can't imagine a life without*, but still emphasized the importance of how it is used. In a similar way, D4 explained that the designer can not live without the usage of GenAI. In addition, D5 preferred to use GenAI and highlighted how, according to the designer, it is always valuable to get extra input and ways of thinking. However, D5 emphasized that it all *depends on how to use it*. Furthermore, D1 and D3 had a slightly more skeptical attitude regarding the matter. D1 explained that the designer uses it *sparingly*, but stated that *it has its place*. D1 explained how the designer used GenAI for idea generation, but not to generate textual output. Moreover, D3 said that it depended on the situation and emphasized not replacing the process of solving a design problem with GenAI.

Regarding whether the designers thought that a design could feel authentic even if parts of it have been created with the help of GenAI, all the designers thought it was possible. D1 further explained that it is possible, if it is a skilled creator. Moreover, D2 added that it also depends on how GenAI is used, which was also emphasized by D4. D2 further explained that it doesn't matter whether something is created by GenAI or a human designer, as long as it feels real. Additionally, according to D4, GenAI is solely a tool and emphasized that it depends on how GenAI is applied.

It is just a way to achieve your goal and refine your designs, it can hopefully challenge you along the way to have a better result in the end [...] It all comes down to how you apply AI I think. If you just put in one bullshit prompt and take the result and publish that - I don't feel that is authentic necessarily in that - there is no intention, no follow up, no refinement that is what the design process is.
- D4

Furthermore, D5 stated that a design can still feel authentic, but that it all depends on the type of product. D5 explained this by saying that if a design aims to express something unique, artistic or cultural, the design needs human authenticity.

Moreover, the collected data revealed some loose, general perceptions of GenAI. Examples of these include that the majority of designers (3 out of 5) considered GenAI to be solely a tool or a sidekick. In addition, D5 believed that regardless of the field one works in, GenAI can elevate the delivery. Further, D3 explained how GenAI can limit the artistic side, since the designer experiences limitations in how the designer can express itself in GenAI. Additionally, D4 said that there is a limitation to what GenAI can help the user with.

I think there is a limitation to what AI can help you with, maybe in terms of the idea you have in your head might not always be the result you get from AI. I worked with music and you can have an idea in your head that is not usually what gets out when you sit down and actually are trying to produce it.
- D4

Beyond that, D2 stated that the majority of the generated ideas are very generic. D4 explained that the designer only viewed GenAI *as a great first draft*, and D1 stated that an implementation of GenAI is an additional stream of input. Furthermore, both D2 and D5 underlined the importance of using and implementing GenAI, and argued that otherwise there is a risk of being outcompeted. In addition, D2 explained how an implementation of GenAI is not intended to replace anything, but rather aims to enable a faster work pace and quicker understanding. The perception that using GenAI could enable a more efficient work process was also shared by the rest of the designers. In addition, the majority of the designers (3 out of 5) experienced enhanced capabilities, since integrating GenAI in the designers working- and design process. Beyond that, the majority of the designers (3 out of 5) explicitly expressed a concern about how an overreliance on GenAI can lead to skill degradation. Furthermore, the majority (4 out of 5) of designers experienced an increase in creativity when using GenAI, while D3 experienced both an enhanced and limited creativity.

4.2.7.2 The Perception of GenAI Content

When the designers were asked whether they have experienced output created by GenAI as "copied" or generic, all of the designers expressed that they have experienced output created by GenAI as generic. D1 explained that it is *the average* of what it is built on. D4 similarly described GenAI as following patterns and creating a *middle ground* of what already exists. D4 also added that it is not innovative and does not contribute anything new to the table.

During the picture element, D2, D3, D4 and D5 described the GenAI pictures as too perfect. D5 described GenAI content often appears tidy, aligned and centered with a few signs of human errors. D5 further expressed that those pictures that have these traces can also be human made, however since they are *too perfect* they can be perceived as GenAI. D3 emphasized that GenAI pictures can feel less human or slightly off due to them being *too perfect*. D3 called this *AI glow*, where someone's skin is too perfect, describing it as a certain glow that usually does not appear in real photos. D3 also highlighted that content that contains *too many fancy words* can reduce both authenticity and trust, explaining that content that has been reviewed by humans at some point feels more genuine. D4 perceived one of the pictures as GenAI due to it being too perfect, explaining that it has neat composition and straight lines. D1 described the GenAI picture as having less personality. D1 further explained that perspectives or shadows often reveal that a picture is GenAI.

4.2.7.3 GenAIs Ambiguous Impact on Authenticity

The designers expressed mixed views on GenAIs impact on authenticity. D2 expressed that GenAI can be used to speed up processes such as research and summarization, which can create time to be authentic in other areas. D2 stated that it is a good thing to work with GenAI in the right way. D2 further expressed the importance of how GenAI is used, its purpose, knowing how to work with it and how to not work with it. D2 also viewed GenAI as *just another tool*, highlighting that the authenticity is affected based on your intention with its use. D2 mentioned that it is easy to get into the opposite direction where you no longer are authentic. D2 viewed authenticity as real and human. Similar to D2, D5 also highlighted the importance of GenAIs purpose, stating that it can increase authenticity if it is used with a specific intention.

D3 stated that GenAI can help speed up some parts of the process while still maintaining human touch in other parts, but did not see it enhancing authenticity. D3 stated that it is not possible since authenticity is linked to humanity, explaining that it is not possible for a *machine* to make something authentic more authentic.

> *I mean it should not be possible because authenticity is connected to humanity, ourselves, our egos, our beings so for a machine to enhance something that is authentic to be more authentic should not be possible.*
> *- D3*

D1 expressed that time is a factor for quality and authenticity, and further explained that GenAI can overall lower quality because it is cheaper. D1 did not see GenAI as something that can increase authenticity, but rather as a risk than possibility. D4 empathized that GenAIs impact on authenticity depends on how it is used, expressing using GenAI without any intention, follow up refinement can reduce authenticity. D4 further stated that using GenAI to be quick and efficient without implementing your own skill and thinking can harm authenticity and quality. However, D4 did express it is still possible to be authentic while increasing speed and efficiency. D4 also noted that GenAI can support authenticity by improving transparency.

4.3 Comparison Between User and Designer Themes

Having outlined the main user- and designer themes, the following section compares the themes and highlights similarities and differences. Moreover, in some cases the main themes overlap between users and designers, while the subthemes do not, and vice versa. This is because the perspectives between users and designers differ slightly, due to different interview questions, where some questions were identical but the majority differed.

4.3.1 Similarities

The results showed several similarities between users and designers. Firstly, both groups strongly associated authenticity with human involvement. All users connected authenticity with human touch, while the majority of the designers similarly linked authenticity to something human. Both users and designers mentioned human presence, intention, emotions, and imperfections when referring to human involvement.

Transparency is another similarity shared by both groups, although with a slight difference. The majority of the users viewed transparency and honesty as essential for something to be perceived as authentic. Likewise, designers also associated authenticity with transparency and disclosure, however their views were more varied. Some designers expressed that disclosure increases authenticity while others were unsure whether it has an effect or not. One designer emphasized that it depends on how GenAI is used.

Regarding creativity, both users and designers viewed GenAI as a tool rather than human replacement. Users underlined that GenAI should support human thinking, while designers described it as something that can both help and limit creativity. Designers also expressed that they viewed GenAI as an integrated tool that supports different design stages that helps improve efficiency.

Both users and designers raised ethical considerations but from different perspectives. Users mainly expressed concerns regarding societal consequences such as jobs displacements, reduced trust and companies not always being fully honest about the usage of GenAI. Likewise, designers also acknowledged these concerns but they also mentioned concerns such as bias in GenAI and environmental impact.

Furthermore, both users and designers acknowledged that the use of GenAI can influence a brands trust and perception, however trust was mentioned to a greater extent by the users. While users focused more on their own experiences, designers focused more on expressing their views in a more practical way, focusing for instance on how the use of GenAI can help speed up processes. In addition, a final similarity between the designers' themes and users' themes, is the perception of the images during the interview's picture element (see Appendix A), which was that the images were perceived as too perfect. Contributing factors to this experience were, for example, few human errors, straight lines and perfect lighting.

4.3.2 Differences

Some differences that emerged between the user- and designer themes, includes the view on the importance of disclosure of the use of GenAI. The majority of the user participants viewed transparency and honesty as key factors for something to be perceived as authentic, whereas solely 2 out of 5 designers thought disclosure and authenticity were linked.

Furthermore, the themes associated with users had a stronger focus on the experience of GenAI, whereas designer-related themes highlighted the perception of the use of GenAI more. Users and designers shared some perceptions about GenAI, such as the emotional response to GenAI content. However, users had a greater focus on this than designers. In addition, the designer themes emphasized areas such as strategy, governance and implementation, which included quality assurance, a strategic implementation of GenAI and validation processes. Due to differences in the interview questions between the groups, this is an area that was not addressed by the users to an equal extent. However, the users themes also highlighted the importance of implementing GenAI in a considered and thoughtful way, including GenAI serving as support for human thinking rather than as a replacement.

Additionally, the designers' themes had a stronger focus on possibilities and benefits in the work and design process related to the implementation of GenAI. This included a perception of an increased efficiency in the design process, since they can work faster and complete various tasks in a shorter time. Another highlighted benefit was that the majority of the designers experienced enhanced capabilities, including a faster and broader understanding of different aspects of tasks. Furthermore, efficiency was also emphasized by the users, however it was not highlighted to the same extent and a balance between efficiency and ethics were underlined.

Moreover, the users' themes had a greater focus on emotions where users focused more on highlighting the experience of GenAI than designers, such as the feeling of AI-generated content, and how it was perceived in terms of emotions and trust for instance. Additionally, a concern of not knowing the authorship behind content, and a risk of feeling betrayed if there is no clear authorship was highlighted.

In addition, the designer themes highlighted the need for domain expertise and skill degradation, something that was not addressed in the user's themes or to an equal extent. Additionally, another difference concerns trust, where users were asked about it, whereas designers were not. Despite this, trust was mentioned by some of the designers.

5

Discussion

5.1 Discussion

This chapter discusses the empirical findings in relation to previous research and theory. The discussion is based on the study's research questions and discusses how designers experience and integrate GenAI in the design process, how users perceive AI-generated content in relation to authenticity and which guidelines companies that use GenAI should follow in order to be perceived as authentic. Lastly, the chapter discusses how AI-generated content affects a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers, followed by the limitations of the study.

This section is structured by first answering the sub-questions and afterwards the main research question, as the sub-questions provide a foundational understanding for the main research question.

5.1.1 How UX/Interaction Designers Experience and Integrate GenAI in the Design Process

The result indicated that all designers experienced that using GenAI could improve efficiency in their work processes, which aligns with prior research showing that integrating AI improves efficiency [6] and task automation [27], [30]. Furthermore, the results showed that the designers experienced task automation via the implementation of GenAI. One designer stated that strategic work, such as working with the branding for a client, used to take weeks before GenAI. Today, it takes approximately one to two days. In addition, one designer emphasized that with the help of GenAI, it takes less time to come up and finalize an idea, which confirms previous research advocating effectiveness [6], [27], [30]. Thus, this may indicate that GenAI is experienced and integrated as a means for increased efficiency in the design process.

Further, the findings showed that all the designers considered GenAI to be a good tool for generating ideas, viewing it as an idea generator and a sounding board. This corresponds with previous research indicating that using AI is considered as a way to bounce ideas with [6] and to brainstorm and visualize ideas [31]. Further, GenAI was used as an idea generator when one designer got stuck in the design process. This aligns with prior research suggesting that GenAI tools can support the individual in engaging in meaningful creative processes, by improving accessibility to the creative process by providing the user with functionalities that lowers the barrier to

entry [35]. This was also exemplified with the GenAI tool ALYSIA, where the user entered an input and received generated suggestions for new song lyrics. Additionally, it is consistent with prior research written by Khan et al [40], stating that AI can help the designer by "providing a starting point for innovation" [40, p. 10] and that the designer may find it difficult to start the creative design process. However, all of the designers experienced GenAI content as generic, which is in line with prior research suggesting that GenAI output is considered generic since it is only based on the available training data [49]. In addition, one designer expressed that GenAI carries a lot of biases, and that ChatGPT's guidelines lean homophobic. This corresponds with previous research regarding ethical concerns that may occur during the user experience designer (UXer)-AI co-creation process, where biased information concerns the risk of certain groups being excluded from the generated responses [49]. This is similar to a study conducted by Bender et al. [51], where it is discussed how large language models, such as GPT-2 and GPT-3, present different kinds of biases, such as stereotypical associations or negative attitudes towards certain groups. This indicates that it is important to be critical and aware of biased output, when using GenAI. Despite this, the empirical findings shows that GenAI is experienced and integrated as a means for idea generation in the design process.

Additionally, the results of the study indicated that the majority of the designers experienced enhanced capabilities, including a faster and broader understanding of different aspects of tasks. Furthermore, the results indicated that GenAI can supplement existing information to enable a more comprehensive understanding, and add new perspectives. This may be consistent with previous theory highlighting that AI can be used as a collaborative tool that designers can benefit from [27]. We believe that AI can be viewed as a collaborative tool, because the designer can use it, e.g., to gain new perspectives and insights in the design process, which can be seen as an advantage. However, despite this, the majority of the designers explicitly expressed a concern about how an overreliance on GenAI could lead to skill degradation. It was discussed how an overreliance could result in a loss of independent thinking, and various skills and capabilities. Previous research highlighting cognitive offloading, shows that a risk posed by cognitive offloading is where an overreliance on AI tools reduces the need for cognitive involvement, which can result in a negative effect on critical thinking [46]. This is consistent with the perceived risk of a loss of independent thinking. Moreover, research conducted by Li et al. [7] highlights the perceived risk of skill degradation, when using GenAI. Li et al. explains that the risk of skill degradation derives from how tasks and activities that previously have been executed by designers, are now instead performed by GenAI. This aligns with the concern about how an overreliance on GenAI could lead to skill degradation. Thus, this may indicate that GenAI is experienced and integrated as a means to increase one's knowledge in the design process.

Moreover, the results indicated that the majority of designers experienced an increase in creativity when using GenAI, which aligns with previous research suggesting that AI is seen as a tool to expand creative thinking, but also through GenAI enabling access to unique, valuable and unexpected output [26]. One designer emphasized the usage of GenAI as another stream of input, which we believe indicates

that GenAI can help the designer to think outside the box. Furthermore, the reported increase in creativity among designers, but also the view of GenAI as an idea generator, corresponds with research conducted by Tholander and Jonsson [41], that present evidence that GenAI improves the ideation phase since outputs, that might not be directly considered by human designers, are created. We believe that the perception that GenAI increases creativity may be seen as contradictory to previous results that showed that GenAI content is perceived as generic by the designers. However, generic content can, as Ackerman and Loker argued [35], be a way to lower the barrier to entry regarding the creative process, which we believe may help foster creative thinking. However, one designer experienced both an enhanced and limited creativity, and highlighted the importance of generating one's own ideas and being a part of the creative process within the creative fields. Previous research emphasizes the importance of involvement in the creative process, since it has intrinsic value for the individual [34], which could explain this perception. Thus, this may indicate that GenAI is experienced and integrated as a means to foster creative thinking in the design process.

The results showed that the majority of the designers' did not think that the utilization of GenAI affected the designers sense of ownership when designing. One designer explained that the designer could not understand how responsibility for a design could be transferred to a tool. This can be argued to correspond with prior research where one participant suggested that GenAI is not a human being, and therefore should not be assigned ownership [7], where our results may indicate that the designer only sees GenAI as a tool, and thus not a human being. Another designer stated that if the output generated by GenAI is iterated, refined and reworked, the sense of ownership when designing is not affected. This corresponds with prior research where one participant stated that if the designer is the one refining, crafting the prompt, contributing creativity and thoughts to AI, and supervising the whole process, the designer should be seen as the owner [7]. However, the findings also indicated that some designers felt that the usage of GenAI actually affected the sense of ownership when designing. This aligns with previous studies highlighting that some designers felt that the use of GenAI made their sense of ownership feel reduced in the final result [33]. It is also in line with prior research, suggesting that ownership is an ethical concern regarding GenAI [6], [7]. Thus, this may indicate that GenAI is experienced and integrated solely as a tool in the design process.

Based on the previously presented empirical findings, we believe that it is possible to argue that GenAI has become an integrated and transformative tool for the designers in the design process, despite that the majority of the designers considered GenAI to be solely a tool or a sidekick. Further, this perception is consistent with the results of this study, where GenAI is applied by all of the designers in their design process. Furthermore, the results also showed that with the help of GenAI, which enables efficiency, it is possible to spend more time on what was considered more important, including making good design and spending time on something that GenAI might not be able to do.

5.1.2 How Users Perceive AI-generated Content in Terms of Authenticity

The results indicated that users generally perceive AI-generated content as less authentic than content created by humans, as authenticity was associated with human presence, intention and emotional involvement. Several users emphasized the importance of having a human in the loop in the creation process, indicating that GenAI alone cannot create content perceived as authentic. This is in line with Lee and Kim's [72] study which found that clothes designed by AI were perceived as less authentic than human-designed clothes. The study also revealed AI customization, which is a process where AI creates a design based on consumers personalization, increased perceived authenticity. Furthermore, it also corresponds with prior research conducted by Brüns and Meißner [11] who highlights that the utilization of GenAI for content creation within the field of social media diminishes the perception of brand authenticity. However, the results indicated that the followers' concerns decreased when GenAI assisted rather than automated the content creation. Additionally, Kim et al [74] concluded that souvenirs designed by AI were perceived as less authentic than human-designed souvenirs. Moreover, Sultana et al. [73] show that participants appeared to put more value into signs of human effort, imperfections, intention and emotional sincerity than whether the work was created by GenAI or humans. Taken together, these findings highlight the importance of human involvement in the creation process of AI-generated content.

Furthermore, Brüns and Meißner [11] explains that social media followers' concerns regarding the use of GenAI for content creation, decreased when GenAI assisted rather than full automation. Similarly, users in this study described GenAI as a supportive tool rather than fully replacing human involvement. We believe that these findings strongly indicate that users perceive GenAI positively when it is used as a supportive tool, however AI-generated content is generally perceived as less authentic due to a lack of human involvement.

Moreover, the findings indicated the importance of emotions and intention in shaping perceived authenticity. Some users found it difficult to connect with GenAI content due to the lack of a human presence behind a message, which reduced the perceived value and importance of the message. This aligns with prior research highlighting the importance of emotion in creating meaningful user experiences [28] and indicating that AI cannot fully capture and communicate nuances of emotional states [27]. The findings can also be understood through source credibility theory, which implies that a message's credibility is affected by the perceived trustworthiness of the communicator [54] Likewise, Lim and Van Der Heide [55] highlight that people tend to judge credibility based on how the message is presented when the source is unfamiliar. Together, these findings indicate that perceived authenticity is not only shaped by the content itself, but also by perceived emotion, intention, human presence and the credibility of the source.

Similarly, users emphasized the importance of having clear authorship or verifying the source of content. Labels or symbols verifying the author behind a content were perceived as ways to enhance transparency and authenticity. This can be connected

to Pedersen and Ritter's [15] concept of digital authenticity, which emphasizes the importance of connecting digital content to a real person, place or time to create trust. This can be reflected in the findings in this study, where users highlighted the importance of clear authorship and knowing who is behind a message, as AI-generated content could otherwise feel inauthentic. These findings therefore indicate that knowing who is behind a message plays a key role in how users perceive authenticity in AI-generated content.

Another important finding was the role of transparency and disclosure of the use of GenAI. The majority of the users emphasized transparency and honesty as key factors for perceived authenticity, and a lack of disclosure created skepticism and uncertainty regarding whether the content could be trusted. This corresponds with Yang and Battocchio's [69] research emphasizing the importance of transparency in shaping customers' perceived authenticity. The findings in this study further indicate that AI-generated content is more accepted when companies are transparent about their GenAI usage compared to when the usage is hidden. However, the findings also revealed a tension between transparency and authenticity, as some users still perceived AI-generated content as less authentic once they knew it was created by GenAI. This corresponds with Pawelczyk et al. [71] study that revealed labeling AI-generated content can reduce perceived authenticity.

The findings also showed the importance of visual imperfections in shaping perceived authenticity. Several users associated minor human flaws, irregularities and everyday life with authenticity, while AI-generated content was perceived as too perfect. This aligns with Farooq and de Vreese [70] study, which found that more realistic AI-generated images were more likely to be perceived as authentic, while unnatural or unrealistic details were more likely to be perceived as not real images. We believe that this suggests that visual imperfections play a vital role when it comes to judging whether something is authentic or not. However, it is also worth acknowledging that, due to the rapid development of GenAI, there is a risk that its output will become so advanced that they begin to replicate these human imperfections. This could result in GenAI content being perceived as authentic which is contradictory.

The findings also indicated that the user's perception of AI-generated content is context-dependent and shaped through critical judgement. Several users expressed that their perceptions depended on what type of content, company and platform in which GenAI was used. While one user expressed both fascination and discomfort towards AI-generated content, others actively judged whether the AI-generated content seemed real or not. We believe that the perceived authenticity is influenced by the context in which the AI-generated content is presented.

5.1.3 Guidelines a Company Should Follow When Using GenAI in Order to Be Perceived as Authentic

A company should follow several guidelines when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic. Based on the empirical findings in this study and previous research, six guidelines that a company should adhere to in order to maintain a perceived authenticity, will be presented in the following text.

5.1.3.1 Maintain Human Involvement

The first guideline a company should follow when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic, is to maintain human involvement. Both users and designers associated authenticity with human presence, intention, emotions and imperfections, while AI-generated content was often perceived as too perfect or lacking human presence. The findings also emphasized the importance of maintaining human involvement through conveying emotions, quality assurance and human oversight when using GenAI. Overall, this indicates that it is crucial for a company to maintain human involvement, if they want to be perceived as authentic.

However, previous research on brand and organizational authenticity, laid out by Morhart et al. [61] and, Shen and Kim [67], do not highlight human involvement as important for a brand or organization to be perceived as authentic. However, the findings in this study and other previous research [11], [72], [73], [74] highlight the importance of human involvement for something to be perceived as authentic. Thus, we argue that maintaining human involvement should be considered a guideline for companies aiming to be perceived as authentic.

5.1.3.2 Be Transparent About GenAI Usage

The second guideline that a company should follow in order to be perceived as authentic is to be transparent about their GenAI usage. The majority of the users associated transparency and honesty with perceived authenticity, underlining the importance for companies to be open about their GenAI usage. A lack of transparency and disclosure created skepticism and reduced trust in the content. The users also underlined the importance of clear authorship and verification of content, where labels or symbols verifying the author behind a content were perceived as potentially increasing transparency and authenticity.

Compared to the users, the designers had more divided opinions regarding disclosure. Some of the designers associated transparency with increased authenticity, as disclosure clarifies what content is AI-generated. At the same time, disclosure was also discussed from a more professional perspective, where views towards transparency may change in the future. Although transparency was more emphasized among the users, we still consider transparency regarding GenAI usage to be an important guideline for companies to follow in order to be perceived as authentic. The reason for this is because the majority of the participants in this study (7 out of 11) underlined transparency and disclosure as essential factors connected to authenticity. Users mainly associated transparency with honesty and trustworthiness, while designers considered it from a more professional perspective and how it may affect users' perception.

The findings align with previous research emphasizing transparency and credibility as central factors in perceived authenticity [61], [67], [69] However, Pawelczyk et al. [71] study highlights how disclosure of AI-generated content may reduce perceived authenticity. Thus, we argue that transparency regarding GenAI usage is an important guideline for companies to follow in order to be perceived as authentic, since

both the findings in this study and previous research highlight the importance of transparency, honesty, credibility and trust in shaping perceived authenticity.

5.1.3.3 Use GenAI as a Supportive Tool to Preserve Originality

The third guideline a company should follow when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic, is to use GenAI as a supportive tool to preserve originality. Both users and designers viewed GenAI as a supportive tool, while also expressing concerns that GenAI may reduce originality and uniqueness. However, some users and designers discussed that the impact on GenAI depends on how it is used.

This aligns with Brüns and Meißner [11] study, which highlighted that AI-generated social media content can reduce perceptions of brand authenticity, however the followers' concerns decrease when GenAI assists rather than automates the content creation. Prior research also highlights originality as a key dimension of brand authenticity [66]. Kristav [68] associates authenticity with originality, such as an original idea or being pioneer of a new concept, within the field of product design. Thus, we argue that using GenAI as a supportive tool to preserve originality should be considered a guideline for companies aiming to be perceived as authentic.

5.1.3.4 Implement GenAI Strategically

The fourth guideline that a company should follow in order to be perceived as authentic is to implement GenAI strategically, meaning in a balanced and planned way that is consistent with a brand's long-term identity. Both users and designers emphasized the importance of implementing GenAI in a considered and thoughtful way. Users viewed GenAI as a supportive tool and underlined that it should support human thinking rather than replacing it, while an excessive GenAI usage was associated with reduced trust, seriousness and originality. Designers emphasized the importance of strategic implementation, including planning, validation, quality assurance and that the usage of GenAI is consistent with a brand's long-term identity rather than short-term efficiency.

The findings align with previous research highlighting the importance of balancing the implementation of GenAI with human judgement, organizational strategy and brand consistency. Akhtar and Ramkumar [27] and Kalving et al. [6] highlight that GenAI should act like a collaborative tool that should support rather than replace human judgement within the design process.

Furthermore, Morhart et al. [61] emphasizes credibility and continuity as essential dimensions of perceived brand authenticity, while Shen and Kim [67] underline consistency as a central dimension of organizational authenticity. This aligns with users' concerns regarding trust, seriousness and the risk of excessive GenAI usage negatively affecting originality, as well as designers focus on strategic and consistent GenAI implementation. The findings in this study show that perceived authenticity is not shaped by whether GenAI is used or not, but rather how thoughtfully, balanced and consistently it is implemented. A strategic GenAI implementation can help companies to maintain trust, seriousness, originality and long-term brand

identity, while an excessive and careless GenAI usage can risk reducing perceived authenticity. Thus, we argue that implementing GenAI strategically should be considered a guideline for companies aiming to be perceived as authentic.

5.1.3.5 Ensure That GenAI Usage Aligns with the Brand's Long-term Identity and Values

The fifth guideline a company should follow when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic is to ensure that GenAI usage aligns with the brand's long-term identity and values. Both users and designers highlighted the importance of ensuring that GenAI usage is consistent and aligned with a brand's long-term identity and values. Users expressed concerns that an excessive overreliance on GenAI could weaken a brand's image, stability, consistency, uniqueness and originality. Designers focused more on maintaining a consistent company voice and ensuring that the usage of GenAI remains aligned with a brand's long-term identity and values. At the same time, it was also highlighted that GenAI may support consistent content creation.

The findings align with previous research that emphasizes the importance of continuity and consistency in shaping perceived authenticity. Morhart et al. [61] refers continuity to a brand's historicity, timelessness and the ability to survive trends. Shen and Kim [67] underline the importance of organisations acting consistently with their promises, values, principles and overall identity. This corresponds with users' concerns regarding brand consistency and stability, as well as designers focus on maintaining a consistent company voice and aligning GenAI usage with a brand's long-term identity and values. Thus, we argue that ensuring that GenAI usage aligns with the brand's long-term identity and values should be considered a guideline for companies aiming to be perceived as authentic.

5.1.3.6 Ensure Ethical and Responsible Implementation of GenAI

The sixth guideline a company should follow when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic, is to ensure ethical and responsible implementation of GenAI. The findings of the study showed that both users and designers experienced several ethical implications when implementing GenAI. Both users and designers discussed the risk of GenAI potentially replacing jobs. Furthermore, users experienced a perceived risk of GenAI output feeling "fake" and they stressed the importance of how GenAI is applied. In contrast, the user results also indicated a more positive view on GenAI and automation, highlighting increased efficiency and reduced costs. In addition, designers highlighted a concern regarding the environmental impact, including the use of water, electricity and energy, and a concern that GenAI carries a lot of biases.

As previously mentioned, the results of this study indicated that the majority of the participants associated authenticity with transparency and disclosure. This can be considered ethically correct, and it may indicate that a company is not trying to "withhold" information. Furthermore, all of the users underlined the importance of clear authorship and verification of GenAI content. Moreover, it emerged that non-

verified GenAI content could result in a feeling of betrayal, which was exemplified with a book that later appeared not to be written by a human. The risk of being misled and tricked, when being exposed to GenAI content was also highlighted. Therefore, we believe that disclosure of the use of GenAI could prevent potential risks, including the recipient feeling deceived or questioning their own competence and intuition, which can be seen as ethically correct.

These empirical findings indicate that a company should ensure ethical and responsible implementation of GenAI, if they want to be perceived as authentic. This corresponds with previous research conducted by Morhart et al. [61], who explain that one dimension of perceived brand authenticity is integrity. This dimension includes the perception of a brand acting ethically and correctly. This dimension also refers to a brand's responsibility and moral purity, meaning the brand's compliance to good values. The associated items are; "A brand that gives back to its consumers", "A brand with moral principles", "A brand true to a set of moral values" and "A brand that cares about its consumers". Thus, we argue that ensuring ethical and responsible implementation of GenAI should be considered a guideline for companies aiming to be perceived as authentic.

5.1.4 How Does the Use of AI-generated Content in Human-Computer Interaction Affect a Company's Perceived Authenticity From the Perspective of Users and Designers?

The empirical findings showed that authenticity remains strongly human-centered, which means that without human presence, the perceived authenticity is affected negatively. The importance of human involvement for something to be perceived as authentic has been highlighted across several prior studies [11], [72], [73], [74] The results of this study showed that authenticity, e.g., was linked to minor flaws, intention, human in the loop, and feeling and perception. Thus, we argue that the use of AI-generated content in the field of HCI negatively affects a company's perceived authenticity, if human involvement is not part of the AI-generated content creation.

The empirical findings also showed that transparency plays a crucial role in shaping perceived authenticity when companies use GenAI. This aligns with previous research that underlines the significance of transparency in shaping consumers' perception of authenticity, suggesting transparency as vital in brand communication [69], and the view of transparency as a central dimension in organizational authenticity [67]. Across the empirical findings, disclosure regarding GenAI usage was associated with honesty, credibility, trustworthiness, while a lack of disclosure could create skepticism and uncertainty. However, while transparency regarding GenAI usage when creating content was appreciated, AI-generated content was still perceived as less authentic once it was disclosed that it had been created by GenAI. Thus, we argue that the use of AI-generated content in the field of HCI negatively affects a company's perceived authenticity if they are not transparent regarding their usage of GenAI in the content creation.

Furthermore, the results showed that authenticity can be understood as an emotional and perceptual experience, indicating that AI-generated content should, to some extent, remain anchored in reality. The result of the study indicated that AI-generated content should convey some type of imperfections and human flaws. Furthermore, authenticity was associated with intention, including prompting something out of value. Authenticity was also linked to feeling and perception, which included the importance of the tone of voice of a design, effort and to be real and genuine. We believe that imperfections, human flaws, genuineness, emotions and intention, are directly connected to human beings, and are therefore considered to be "something human". This is in line with prior research highlighting the importance of human involvement for something to be perceived as authentic [11], [72], [73], [74]. Thus, we argue that the use of AI-generated content in the field of HCI negatively affects a company's perceived authenticity, if a company does not consider the emotional and perceptual experience associated with AI-generated content.

In addition, the empirical findings showed that authenticity is strongly linked to GenAI being considered a supportive tool rather than a replacement in order to preserve originality. Beyond this, the empirical findings indicated that the use of GenAI could correlate negatively with originality. This corresponds with previous research suggesting that social media followers' concern regarding the use of GenAI for content creation, decrease when GenAI assists rather than automates the content creation [11]. Furthermore, authenticity was associated with originality [68] and originality was presented as a key dimension of brand authenticity, as mentioned by Abratt and Bendixen [66]. Thus, we argue that the use of AI-generated content in the field of HCI negatively affects a company's perceived authenticity, if GenAI is not used as a supportive tool in the AI-generated content creation process.

Moreover, the empirical findings show that perceived authenticity is not determined by whether GenAI is used or not, but how it is strategically implemented within a company. Across all the findings, it was emphasized that GenAI should be used as a supportive tool that is implemented in a balanced and planned way that is consistent with a brand's long-term identity. This corresponds with previous research highlighting AI as a collaborative and assisting tool, rather than human replacement [27]. Further, it is in line with the view of consistency as a central dimension of organizational authenticity [67]. Thus, we argue that the use of AI-generated content in the field of HCI negatively affects a company's perceived authenticity when GenAI is not implemented strategically.

5.2 Limitations

The study has several limitations that should be acknowledged when interpreting the findings. The study included only eleven participants, including five designers and six users. Due to the small number of participants, the results of this study cannot be generalized to a larger population. Furthermore, the designers were recruited from only two companies, which may have influenced the diversity of perspectives in the study. However, the purpose of this qualitative study was to gain in-depth and rich insights rather than statistically generalizable results.

Another limitation of the study was the limited timeframe. The study's time constraint has affected both the data collection and the analysis process. More time could have made it possible to include more participants, conduct further semi-structured interviews, and analyze the data on a deeper level. More time could also have made it possible to explore further perspectives on GenAI and authenticity in the field of HCI.

Language was also a limitation in this study, since all of the semi-structured interviews were conducted in English even though the participants were not native English speakers. This may have influenced the participants' ability to fully express their thoughts. Several participants switched between English and Swedish to explain certain thoughts more clearly. Because of the language barriers, some meanings may have been lost or simplified.

Lastly, the study was limited to the field of HCI and focused on authenticity from the perspective of users and designers. As a result, other potentially relevant perspectives and fields were not included in this study.

6

Conclusion

This study explored how the use of AI-generated content in Human-Computer Interaction affects a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers. Using a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with designers and users to explore how AI-generated content affects a company's perceived authenticity.

Regarding SQ1 "How do UX/interaction designers experience and integrate GenAI in the design process?", the findings indicate that GenAI is experienced and integrated as a means for increased efficiency, as a means for idea generation and solely as a tool, in the design process. The empirical findings further suggest that GenAI is experienced and integrated as a means to increase one's knowledge and to foster creative thinking in the design process. Overall the findings demonstrate that GenAI has become an integrated and transformative tool that can support designers in their work practices and in the design process.

Regarding SQ2 "How do users perceive AI-generated content in terms of authenticity?", the findings suggest that users generally perceive AI-generated content as less authentic due to lack of human involvement. Authenticity is strongly associated with human presence, intention, emotion and credibility, suggesting that users value content that reflects a real person behind a message. While GenAI is perceived more positively when used as a supportive tool rather than replacing humans completely, AI-generated content is still generally perceived as less authentic due to lack of human presence. While transparency regarding GenAI usage is appreciated and viewed as vital for trust and honesty, it does not automatically increase perceived authenticity, as some users still associate authenticity with human involvement. The findings also highlight the importance of visual imperfections and contextual factors in shaping perceived authenticity. Taken together, users' perceived authenticity of AI-generated content does not depend only on the content, but also on human involvement and the context in which the content is presented.

Regarding SQ3 "What guidelines should a company follow when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic?", the findings show that a company should apply six guidelines. The guidelines are to "Maintain human involvement", "Be transparent about GenAI usage", "Use GenAI as a supportive tool to preserve originality", "Implement GenAI strategically", "Ensure that GenAI usage aligns with the brand's long-term identity and values" and "Ensure ethical and responsible implementation of GenAI". Taken together, these guidelines suggest that when a company imple-

ments them, a company's usage of GenAI is more likely to be perceived as authentic, as they maintain human involvement, transparency, consistency, ethical considerations and brand identity.

Finally to answer the research question "How does the use of AI-generated content in Human-Computer Interaction affect a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers?", the findings indicate that the use of AI-generated content affects a company's perceived authenticity negatively if human involvement is not part of the AI-generated content creation and if the use of GenAI in the content creation process is not transparent. The empirical findings further suggest that a company's perceived authenticity is affected negatively if a company does not consider the emotional and perceptual experience associated with AI-generated content. Additionally, a company's perceived authenticity is affected negatively if GenAI is not used as a supportive tool in the AI-generated content creation process and if GenAI is not implemented strategically. Overall, the findings demonstrate that GenAI must be used in a considerate way in the AI-generated content creation process in order for a company to be perceived as authentic.

7

Future Research

Future studies may extend this research by having a larger sample of participants, which may enable generalizability. This would be of interest, as a larger sample may strengthen the overall credibility of this research study. Additionally, future research could also extend the sample geographically, by studying the same phenomenon in different countries, to gain a broader understanding of the perception of GenAI and authenticity, since the perception may vary. Moreover, this study highlights the importance of human involvement for a company to be perceived as authentic. It would therefore be interesting to further explore how a "human-in-the-loop" design process can be designed in detail, both to maintain authenticity and ensure that GenAI is used effectively. Exploring how such processes may be designed and should be developed can help companies take practical, real-world actions to maintain perceived authenticity.

In addition, future research could also explore whether there are potential differences in perceptions of GenAI and authenticity across different generations. This would provide interesting insights into whether views differ depending on age, as the development of technology is still relatively new and continuously evolving.

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A

Appendix 1

A.1 AI-Generated Cat

Figure A.1: AI-generated image of a cat created using Google Gemini

A.2 Real Image of a Cat

Figure A.2: Real image of a cat photographed by Melanie Andersen, sourced from Unsplash

A.3 AI-Generated House

Figure A.3: AI-generated image of a house created using Google Gemini

A.4 Real Image of a House

Figure A.4: Real image of a house photographed by Wrede, sourced from Byggahus

B

Appendix 2

Research Questions

RQ: How does the use of AI-generated content in Human-Computer Interaction affect a company's perceived authenticity from the perspective of users and designers?

SQ1: How do UX/interaction designers experience and integrate GenAI in the design process?

SQ2: How do users perceive AI-generated content in terms of authenticity?

SQ3: What guidelines should a company follow when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic?

Interview Guide for Designers

Create a Thorough Understanding of the Interviewees and the Interviewee's Relationship to GenAI:

1. How long have you been working for this company?
2. Can you describe your current job role?
3. How long have you been utilizing GenAI?
4. In which parts of the design process do you usually use GenAI?
5. Do you prefer to use GenAI or not to use GenAI? Why?

General Perceptions of GenAI

6. Have you experienced any changes since integrating GenAI in your working/design process?
7. Do you feel that an implementation of GenAI enhances or limits your creativeness?

8. When using GenAI, do you feel like you can fully express yourself in your role as a designer?
9. Does the utilization of GenAI affect your sense of ownership when designing?
10. Have you experienced any ethical concerns when using GenAI?
11. Have you ever experienced that output created by GenAI has felt "copied" or generic?

Authenticity and Designers

12. How would you define "authenticity"?

    Explanation of the term: There are different types of authenticity, including digital, brand, and organizational authenticity. What is considered authentic can differ across these fields, but overall something is considered authentic if it is transparent, original, ethical, consistent, and truthful.

13. What makes a digital product or design authentic?
14. Do you think that a design can feel authentic even if parts of it have been created with the help of GenAI?
15. Do you think that GenAI has the ability to enhance authenticity? Why? Why not?
16. Prior research highlights that UX designers experience that the use of GenAI streamlines workflow; do you believe that efficiency and speed conflict with authenticity?

Picture Element

We are now going to show you two pictures at the same time, one is created by GenAI and the other one is human made. [Show the pictures]. What are your intuitive thoughts of these pictures?

Organization and Authenticity

17. How do you perceive a company that encourages you to use GenAI?
18. Would disclosure of the usage of GenAI affect how authentic a brand feels?
19. Does the usage of GenAI threaten the uniqueness of a company and designers?
20. Imagine a company that heavily relies on GenAI; is it possible to still be perceived as morally and ethically grounded?
21. How do you make sure that the usage of GenAI is consistent with a brand's long-term identity rather than short-term efficiency?
22. Do you think that using GenAI makes it easier or harder to maintain a consistent company voice?

23. What should a company consider when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic?

Interview Guide for Users

Create a Thorough Understanding of the Interviewees and the Interviewee's Relationship to GenAI:

1. When you are exposed to content that is created by GenAI, how do you react?

GenAI vs Human

2. How do you perceive something that appears to be human-made but is actually AI-generated?
3. Do you prefer content created by GenAI or humans?

Trust

4. Do you believe that GenAI textual and visual content can influence your trust in a company?

Authenticity, User, and Organization

5. How would you define "authenticity"?

   Explanation of the term: There are different types of authenticity, including digital, brand, and organizational authenticity. What is considered authentic can differ across these fields, but overall something is considered authentic if it is transparent, original, ethical, consistent, and truthful.

6. What makes a digital product or design authentic?
7. Do you believe that authenticity is linked to human involvement? Why? Why not?
8. Do you believe that verifying the designer would increase or decrease the perceived authenticity of the design?
9. Do you think it is possible to identify, connect to your "true self", and relate to AI-generated content if you know it is created by GenAI?
10. Would disclosure of the usage of GenAI affect how authentic a company feels?
11. When a company uses GenAI, do you feel that the company acts more or less ethically and correctly towards employees, customers, and society?
12. Do you experience that a company using GenAI can influence how long-term and stable the brand appears? In what way?

Picture Element

We are now going to show you two pictures at the same time, one is created by GenAI and the other one is human made. [Show the pictures]. What are your intuitive thoughts of these pictures?

Continuation of Remaining Interview Questions

13. Do you feel that the use of GenAI impacts your perception of what defines the company and what distinguishes it from others?
14. Imagine a company stating that it is original and innovative; do you believe that the company's use of GenAI reflects its stated beliefs, values, and principles?
15. Do you think that GenAI has the ability to enhance authenticity? Why? Why not?
16. Does the usage of GenAI threaten the uniqueness of a company and designers?
17. How do you perceive a company that encourages its employees to use GenAI?
18. What should a company consider when using GenAI in order to be perceived as authentic?