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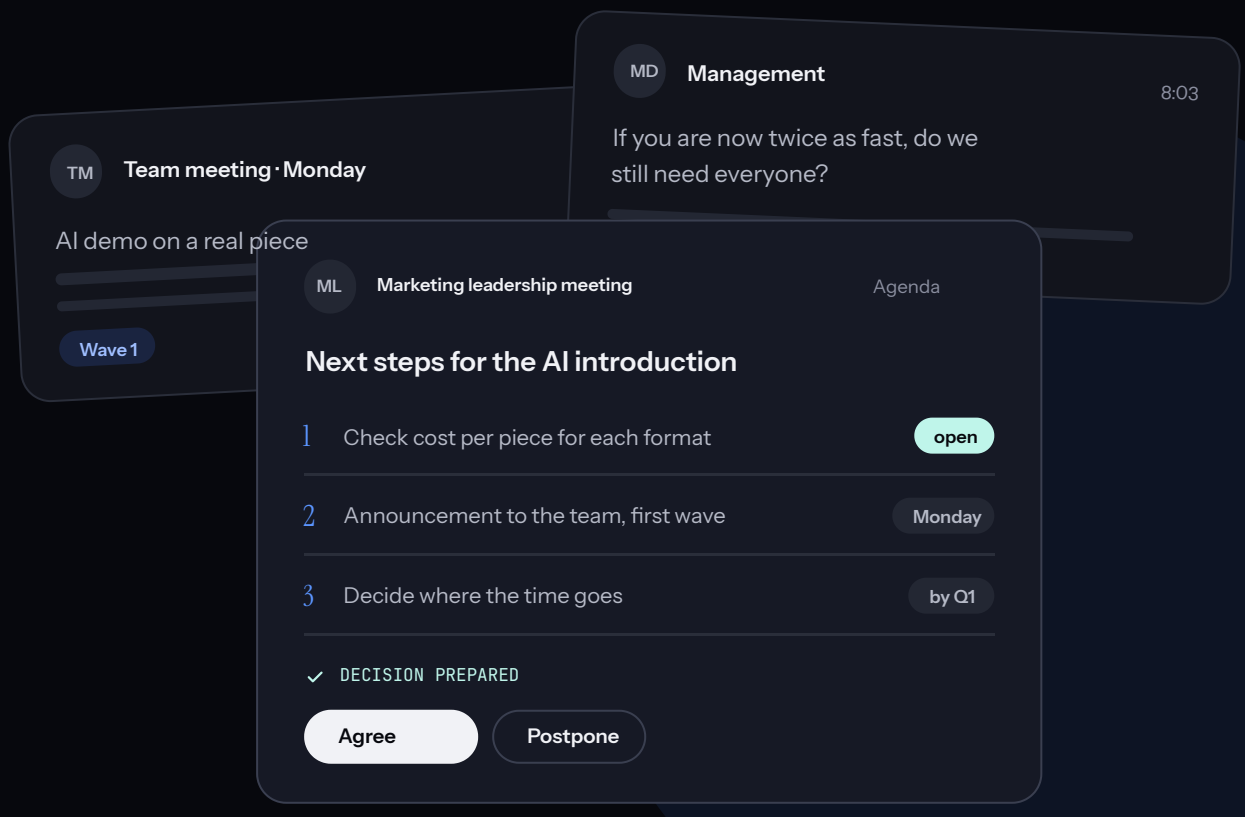
GUIDE · AS OF NOVEMBER 2026

FOR MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS LEADERS

The AI shift in the content team.

How to make the transition.

What happens to budget and positions when texts are created faster, how you bring the team along and where the time gained goes. For teams that have decided on AI and for those about to.



14 pages · with 4 templates to copy and fill in

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Foreword

The decision has been made. Now the work begins.

1 What happens to budget and positions?

2 How do we bring the team along?

3 Where does the time gained go?

4 How do we introduce it?

Whether a content team should use AI is no longer a question in most companies. It gets harder after that. If a specialist article only takes half the time, what does that mean for budget and positions? What do you tell the team wondering whether they are still needed? And who decides what happens to the hours gained?

These questions land with the head of marketing or communications, at the latest when management asks about the savings. They cannot be delegated to IT or the tool provider.

This guide puts them in order and shows which decisions you should make before, during and after the introduction. It comes with four templates. You can fill in tables and the checklist directly in the PDF. All examples and figures are entirely fictitious. Where legal matters are concerned, we name the regulation; this does not replace legal advice. There is a separate version for agencies.

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Chapter 01

Not a tool project. A transformation.

The tool is usually set up in a few days. It takes longer for new habits to settle in and for it to be clear how the team's work will be measured in future.

Why AI is different from new software

A new editorial system usually replaces an old one; the work stays the same. AI changes the work itself because it researches, structures and writes drafts, which people used to do. This shifts who does what and how long it takes.

Why the most important things get left behind

The transition takes place on four levels, but only the top one has a deadline and a contact person. Processes, habits, budget and roles are in no project plan. That is why they get left behind, even though they take longest and can least be delegated.

Why introductions fail

Technology is almost never the problem. Usually nobody on the team knows exactly what the tool is meant for, there is no time to try it out in everyday work, or the drafts do not sound like your own brand because brand voice and rules are stored nowhere. Then everyone keeps writing as before.

What follows from this

Alongside the technical plan, a second one is needed. It states who explains the changes to the team, who decides on budget and roles and who checks after four weeks whether the work has become easier.

FIG. 1 **Four levels of the transition and who is responsible for them**

Level	What changes	Responsible	Duration
Technology	Set up the tool, assign access, connect systems	**IT and provider**	Days
	Below lies the actual transition		
Processes	Who briefs, who checks, who approves, where the brand voice is stored	**Content lead**	Weeks
Habits	Editing drafts instead of writing yourself, learning to trust suggestions	**The whole team**	Months
Budget and roles	Key figures, job profiles, external spending	**Head of marketing**	Quarters

Own illustration. Duration as a rough estimate.

Rule of thumb — The tool is ready in days. Everything below it takes months.

Chapter 02

What happens to budget and positions?

“If you are now twice as fast, do we still need everyone?”

Typical question from management, shortly after the introduction

Content rarely costs hours; it costs heads

In most companies, content is not paid by the hour. The team is permanently employed, plus agencies, freelancers and tools. If the work becomes faster, costs do not fall automatically. Capacity increases. The question is what you use it for.

Where it gets tight

AI becomes noticeable where external work is billed by effort, i.e. agencies with hourly quotas and freelancers with day rates. Internally it gets tight when management books the time gained as savings before you have said what it is meant for.

The value remains

What a piece is worth depends on its impact, not on the time it cost. A specialist article that brings in inquiries is not worth less with AI. It just costs less. This is exactly the calculation you should show management.

The piece-count trap

Many teams measure themselves by the number of published pieces. With AI, this number rises quickly, but impact does not necessarily. Whoever only measures quantity gets more of the same and a team that does not know why thoroughness pays off.

FIG. 2 **The same capacity gained, three ways to use it**

Route	External budget	Number of pieces	Time for planning and impact	What to watch out for
Cut costs same quantity, less external	falls	stays	stays	Savings are booked once and then they are gone
Increase quantity more channels, more formats	stays	rises	stays	More output without a plan increases pressure on the team
Increase impact same quantity, better work	stays	stays	rises	Needs key figures, otherwise nobody sees the effect

Own illustration. In practice, most teams mix the three routes. What matters is to set the mix deliberately.

Rule of thumb

It is not AI that cuts the budget. It is the decision about what you use the capacity gained for.

Chapter 02 · continued

Three levers for the budget.

No budget has to be restructured overnight. But it pays to sort formats by effort and cost once and to decide deliberately for each.

1 · Recut external services

Where agencies or freelancers bill by the hour, it is worth talking about fixed prices per format or packages with fixed results. That way you benefit from faster work without your partners having to work against the tool.

2 · Cost per piece instead of heads

Calculate once what a piece costs per format today, internally and externally. That is the basis for every budget conversation because it shows what changes with AI and what does not. The guide Nine hours per piece shows where the time goes today.

3 · Invest the time in impact

The third lever is not a cost question. Hours gained flow into work that used to be left undone: topic planning, updating existing pieces, distribution and evaluation. More on this in chapter 03.

Make performance visible

Record not only how many pieces were published but also what they achieved, such as inquiries, reach in the audience or feedback from sales. Proving content impact shows how.

Template · cost check per format · fillable on screen

Format	Pieces per year	Hrs per piece today	Hrs per piece with AI	Cost per hr	Cost per piece today	Cost per piece with AI	Lever
Specialist article, internal	24	9	5	€80	€720	€400	3
LinkedIn post, internal	120	1.5	0.5	€80	€120	€40	3
Press release, agency	10	6	4	€110	€660	€440	1

Cost per piece = hours per piece × cost per hour. Estimate internal hourly costs roughly, for example annual salary including ancillary costs divided by productive hours. Grey rows are an entirely fictitious calculation example. For the overall calculation, there is the ROI calculator.

Chapter 03

Where the time gained goes.

Time gained disappears surprisingly quickly into coordination, special requests and the next campaign. Whoever does not decide in advance what it is meant for will notice no relief after three months.

Four directions

With the same team, you can cover more channels and formats, increase the impact of existing content, improve quality and brand consistency or noticeably relieve the team, with less overtime before launches and trade fairs. No direction is better than another. What matters is that leadership commits and says so.

“Do we now just get more output?”

That is exactly what many on the team fear. If every hour gained is immediately filled with new pieces, the team learns that AI mainly means more pressure. Then the tool is avoided. Better is an honest split, for example one part for impact, one part for new formats and a noticeable part for the team itself.

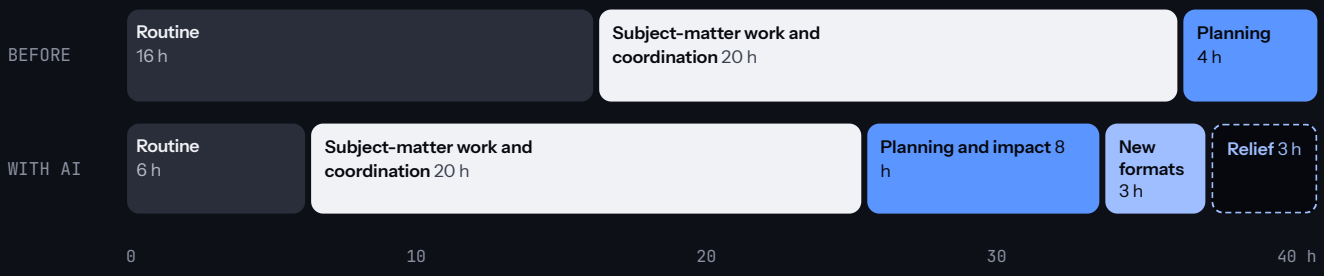
What gets left undone today

Almost every content team has a list of things there is never time for: updating old pieces, planning topics properly, preparing content for sales, evaluating results. With AI, this list becomes a plan. How to organize it is shown in the use case
Topic planning and editorial calendar.

Growth without new hires

Many teams are supposed to cover more channels without getting additional positions. With AI, this is possible without overloading the team. That is a different message from job cuts and should be phrased that way.

FIG. 3 **A 40-hour working week, before and with AI**



Of the **10 hours less routine**, 4 go into planning and impact and 3 into new formats; 3 remain with the team as relief. Routine here means research, first drafts and variants per channel.

Own illustration. Example split, not a measurement.

Rule of thumb

Decide where the time goes before it becomes free. And tell the team which part stays with them.

Chapter 04

Bringing the team along.

In almost every content team, you hear three concerns: “Will I be replaced?”, “Then everything will sound the same” and “This does nothing for me”. All three deserve an honest answer, ideally on your own text rather than in a presentation.

“Will I be replaced?”

AI takes over work steps, not responsibility. It shifts the job profile, from writing to editing and from producing to steering. So present it as support for the editorial team and not as a tool with which leadership measures performance.

“Then everything will sound the same”

This concern is justified as long as brand voice, examples and no-gos are not stored anywhere. Then every tool delivers interchangeable texts. The solution is not a better prompt but a maintained data foundation that everyone accesses. The use case Brand voice and AI policy shows how to build it.

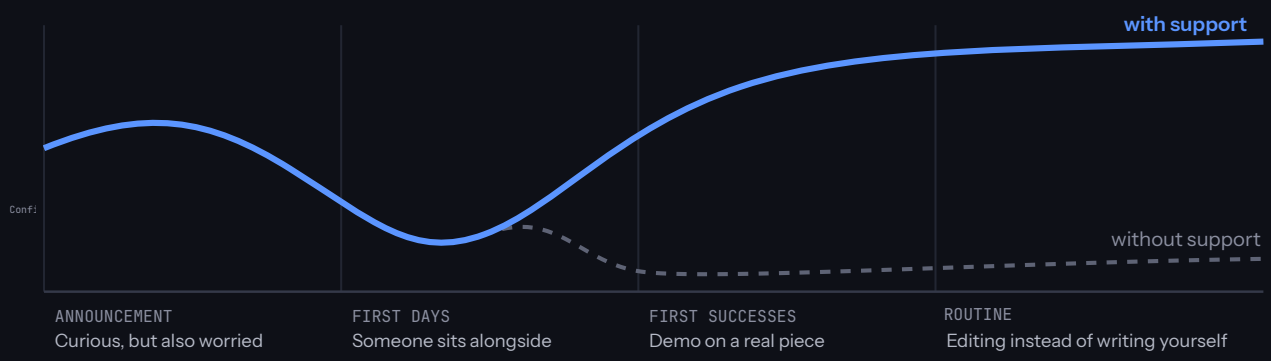
“This does nothing for me”

This concern is harder to refute because it is often true in the first days. At the beginning, every new tool costs time because you have to check suggestions, correct errors and get used to new processes. Whoever is left alone in this phase returns to the old way of working.

Through the dip after the start

Curiosity is followed by a few tough days before the first successes show. It helps if someone sits alongside and errors are collected instead of worked around. In the team meeting, a colleague shows live on a real piece what the work looks like now. It is important that leadership explicitly allows this time, even when a campaign is pressing.

FIG. 4 **Confidence in the team in the first weeks after the start**



Own illustration. Typical course, not a measurement.

Rule of thumb

The team is not convinced in the presentation but on its own text.

Chapter 04 · continued

The announcement. What you say.

The first impression shapes how the team sees the tool. A short, honest announcement by leadership has more effect than any training.

Tell first, then invite

Ideally, leadership first explains why in the team meeting. Then someone from the team who already uses the tool shows how it works live. Only then do the invitations follow. Colleagues and short examples convince more than formal training appointments.

Three things that must be said

The team must hear why you are doing this, what changes for the individual and what does not, and what should happen to the time gained. If the last point is missing, the team fills the gap itself, usually with the worst assumption.

Training is part of it

Under Art. 4 of the AI Act, companies that use AI take measures to promote their staff's AI literacy. Since the amendment by Regulation (EU) 2026/1744, in force since 27 July 2026, no particular level has to be guaranteed. A short briefing with date, content and participants remains good evidence.

What you had better not say

“This means we need fewer people.” “From now on, we will do twice as much.” “We will look at who uses it how often.” All three sentences are said quickly and have a long effect. Whoever wants to know how things are going simply asks the team what helps and what is annoying.

Template · announcement to the team

New message to copy

To	Everyone in marketing
Subject	How we use AI

Dear team,

from [date] we will use an AI tool for [e.g. research, first drafts and variants per channel] . Because this raises questions, here is the most important information in advance.

1. We want to make the routine smaller, not the team.
2. The AI researches, structures and writes drafts. Editing, decisions and approvals remain with you. 3. The time gained should go into [e.g. topic planning, updating existing content and less overtime before launches] .
4. Nobody has to learn the tool alone. [Name] already uses it and will be your contact person in the first weeks.

On [date] we will show it to you in the team meeting on real pieces, and then the invitations will follow. Every [weekday] we will take a quarter of an hour for your feedback.

Best regards
[Head of marketing]

Rule of thumb

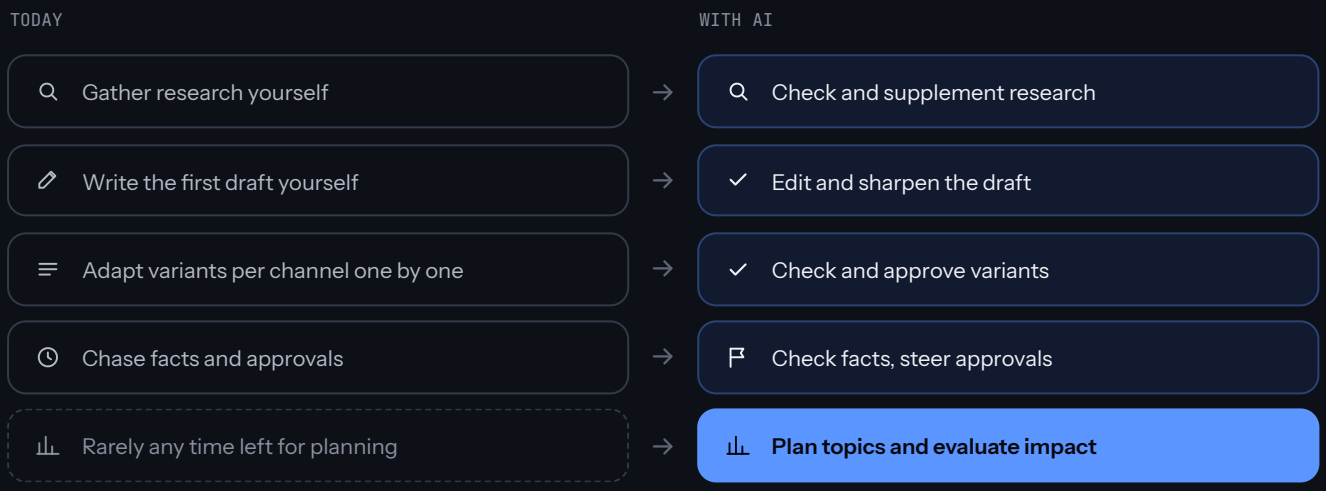
Whoever does not say where the time gained goes leaves the answer to the rumor mill.

Chapter 05

New roles in the team. From writing to editing.

When AI prepares, the work shifts. This changes job profiles, onboarding and the question of how good work is measured.

FIG. 5 **How a working day in the editorial team shifts**



Own illustration. Example from everyday editorial work.

Editing is a skill in its own right

Whoever checks a draft needs different skills from someone who writes it themselves. You have to know what matters, recognize errors that sound plausible and have the courage to reject a suggestion. This should be explicitly learned and recognized. The checklist before approval helps.

AI buddies

Every team has one or two people who like to try out new tools. Make them contacts for their colleagues and give them time for it. Explanations on a real piece, from the desk next door, are more effective than any external training.

What happens to onboarding?

Trainees and juniors have often learned their craft through simple texts, such as news items, posts and first drafts. If AI takes this over, this learning stage is missing. Deliberately define what newcomers continue to write themselves, and have them edit AI drafts with justification.

Reassess performance

Whoever only measures the number of pieces rewards volume. Better yardsticks are impact per topic, deadlines met, correction loops until approval and feedback from business units and sales. Who does what in the content team shows which roles you need.

Rule of thumb

The job profile changes, not the value of the work. Train specifically for editing and steering.

Chapter 06

In waves, not all at once.

Experience with AI and appetite for something new are unevenly distributed in every team. An introduction in waves uses this instead of working against it.

Wave 1 · The curious

Two or three people keen on the topic start with a single format, such as social variants from existing pieces. They find the
teething problems before the whole team experiences them and later become buddies for everyone else.

Beforehand · The data foundation

Before wave 2 starts, brand voice,
audiences, no-gos and formats should be stored in writing. Otherwise everyone repeats the same
corrections, and the drafts remain interchangeable.

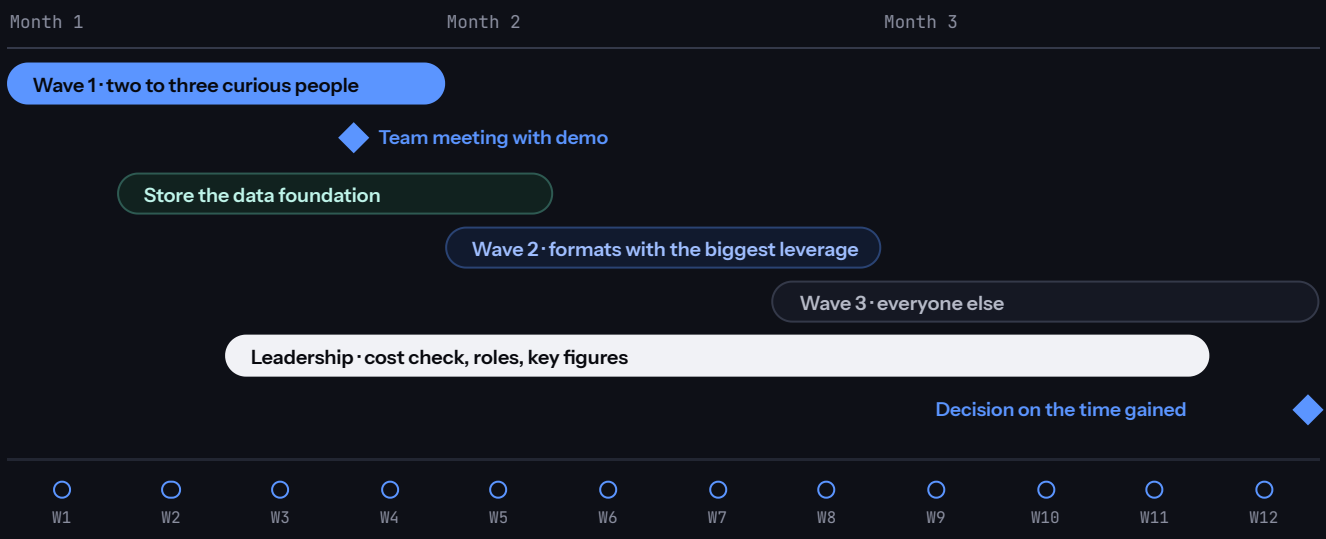
Team meeting, waves 2 and 3

After three to four weeks, someone from the first wave shows live on real pieces in the team meeting what the work looks like now. Then come the formats with the biggest leverage, such as newsletters, specialist articles or press releases. After that everyone else follows, ideally in pairs at their own desk rather than in a large group.

In parallel · Budget and roles

While the team learns, leadership clarifies the deeper levels from chapter 01, i.e. budget, job profiles and key figures. After three months at the latest, it should be clear how the time gained will be distributed. Pilot and rollout shows why a short test is not enough for this.

FIG. 6 **Twelve weeks from the first wave to regular operation**



Circles: feedback quarter-hour, every week

Own illustration. Period varies depending on team size.

Rule of thumb

The first wave decides on the second. Choose it by enthusiasm, not by hierarchy.

Chapter 07

Talk upwards and sideways. Openly, without promising savings.

Sooner or later, management asks what AI saves, and a business unit asks whether the texts are still reviewed. Whoever is prepared for this turns both questions into a good conversation.

“What do we save?”

The honest answer: time first, not money. Whether this turns into lower costs, more formats or more impact, you decide together. Show the cost per piece from the cost check and propose a split instead of waiting for the question.

“Is this still reviewed?”

Business units want to know who answers for content. The answer: the same people as before. Every draft is edited, facts are checked, approval follows the familiar path. The use case Approval processes shows how to keep the path short.

Do you have to label?

Art. 50 of the AI Act has applied since 2 August 2026. AI-generated texts intended to inform the public on matters of public interest
must be disclosed. This does not apply if a person has reviewed them and someone bears editorial responsibility. Record who reviews and who is responsible. More in AI labeling.

Turn the advantage into an offer

Instead of talking about savings, a concrete offer pays off: a topic that was previously left undone, a channel that was missing or faster responses to occasions. That turns time gained into something management can see.

Template · email to management

New message — to copy

Subject: AI in marketing: what changes and where the time goes

Hello [name] ,

since [month] we have been using an AI tool for [e.g. research, drafts and variants per channel] . Here is the status in four points.

1. **What changes:** routine work gets shorter, for example for [format] from [x] to [y] hours per piece.
2. **What stays the same:** we edit every text and approve it via the familiar path. Responsibility stays with the team.
3. **Where the time goes:** we propose investing it in [e.g. updating existing content and an additional channel] .
4. **How we measure it:** [e.g. cost per piece, inquiries from content, time to approval] . We will present the first review on [date] .

Best regards
[Head of marketing]

Rule of thumb

Management does not buy time savings but results. Say in advance which ones.

Chapter 08

How to tell that it is working.

After three months, nobody should have to say “I think it helps”. Five simple signs show whether the transition holds and where it does not.

FIG. 7 **Five signs that it holds**

Usage	Is everyone who is supposed to work with it doing so?	weekly
Relief	Overtime, tasks left undone	monthly
Quality	Correction loops, time to approval	monthly
Cost per piece	per format, from the cost check	quarterly
Mood	What helps, what annoys, what do we change?	weekly

Own illustration.

Usage before savings

The first question is not how much time is saved, but whether the tool is used at all, by everyone who is supposed to use it. Whoever is not working with it after four weeks has a reason. Finding it out is more valuable than any statistic.

Relief you can feel

Good signs are less overtime before launches, a shorter list of tasks left undone and calmer weeks before trade fairs. This can be proven with time tracking, the editorial calendar and the time to approval.

Cost per piece

With the cost check from chapter 02, you have a baseline. After a quarter, the comparison pays off. Where costs do not fall, the bottleneck usually lies in the process, for example in the briefing or approval, not in the tool.

The mood in the team

The weekly quarter-hour is the best early warning system. Whoever takes the answers seriously and visibly acts on them wins over the skeptics. The use case Reporting and monitoring shows how to report impact regularly.

Template · agenda for the quarterly meeting

Meeting · quarterly AI review to copy

1. Who uses the tool, who does not, and why?
2. Have overtime, tasks left undone and correction loops decreased?
3. How has the cost per piece developed for each format?
4. What do we change by the next meeting, and who takes care of it?

Rule of thumb

What nobody looks at does not get better. One fixed meeting per quarter is enough.

To tick off · fillable on screen

The checklist. Everything on one page.

Twelve points for the head of marketing or communications, in the order in which they come up during the transition.

DECISION

- [ ] We have defined who is responsible for the transition.
- [ ] We have defined where the time gained should go.
- [ ] The first wave has been selected, by enthusiasm, not by hierarchy.

TEAM

- [ ] Leadership announced the introduction personally.
- [ ] There are AI buddies, and they have time for it.
- [ ] The briefing under Art. 4 AI Act is documented.

BUDGET

- [ ] We know the cost per piece for each format.
- [ ] External services are agreed by results instead of hours.
- [ ] We measure impact, not just the number of pieces.

COORDINATION AND IMPACT

- [ ] Brand voice, no-gos and formats are stored.
- [ ] Management knows the goal and the split of the time gained.
- [ ] Feedback quarter-hour and quarterly meeting are in the calendar.

NOTES

Rule of thumb

If all boxes are ticked, the transition holds. If one is missing, you know exactly where to start.

Continue with implementation

From guide *to implementation.*

The use cases show step by step for individual tasks how to set up processes, agents and the data foundation. The guides go deeper into the topics in this PDF.

USE CASES

- Brand voice and AI policy
  Data foundation so that drafts sound like you →
- Approval processes
  Clear roles, fewer loops →
- Reporting and monitoring
  Make impact visible regularly →
- All 15 use cases
  Process, agents and instructions →

GUIDES AND TOOLS

- Pilot and rollout
  Why a short trial proves nothing →
- Business case for content software
  The template for the conversation with your boss →
- AI policy for marketing
  Word template with data traffic light and approval path →
- ROI calculator
  What pays off for your team →

IN THIS PDF TO COPY AND FILL IN

Cost check per format	Announcement to the team	Email to Management	Agenda quarterly meeting	Checklist
Page 5	Page 8	Page 11	Page 12	Page 13

30-MINUTE ANALYSIS · FREE OF CHARGE

Where does your content process lose time today?

In 30 minutes, we look together at processes, tools and AI use. Afterwards you know where time and budget are lost and what to tackle first.

Choose a date

About Dennis Gumprich

Dennis Gumprich writes on dennis-gumprich.de about content operations, AI quality and tool selection for marketing and communications teams in mid-sized companies.

For agencies

What happens to hourly rates, client conversations and the offering is covered in the version The AI shift in the agency.