

WS

WHAT SCENE?

A SHORT, OPINIONATED GUIDE BY WHAT SCENE

The AI-First Marketing Playbook

How a small team ships like a big one, without the hype.

Most "AI marketing" is the same old content treadmill with a chatbot bolted on. AI-first is something more specific, and more useful. You redesign the work around what machines actually do well, so a lean team moves at a scale that used to need a department. This is the short version of how we think about it, and what to do on Monday.

01

AI-first vs AI-washing

AI-washing is bolting a chatbot onto the homepage, generating a thousand generic posts, and calling it transformation. It looks busy and changes nothing.

AI-first starts from the outcome you want, finds the steps a machine does faster, cheaper, or more consistently, and rebuilds the workflow around them. Humans keep the judgment. Machines take the volume.

Here's the test: if you removed the AI tomorrow, would the work fall apart or just slow down? AI-first means it would fall apart, because the workflow was designed for it in the first place.

The five places AI earns its keep right now

- > Research and positioning. Synthesize competitor messaging, real customer language, and market gaps in an afternoon instead of three weeks.
- > Content systems, not content. Build the frameworks, briefs, and variations, then turn one strong idea into ten channel-native pieces. You still finish by hand so it actually lands.
- > Customer-facing tools. Copilots, recommendation features, support that genuinely helps. The kind of thing a competitor can't copy by Friday.
- > Automation. The hundred small jobs, reporting, CRM hygiene, onboarding, that quietly eat your team's week.
- > Measurement. Pull signal out of scattered data so decisions stop running on vibes.

Notice what is not on this list: replacing your taste, your strategy, or your voice. Those are the parts that make the work yours, and the parts AI is worst at.

03

Your first 30 days

Week 1, map the work.

Write down every recurring marketing task and who does it. Mark the ones that are repetitive, rules-based, or research-heavy. That list is your opportunity map.

Week 2, pick one.

Choose the task with the most hours and the least judgment. High volume, low taste. That is your first AI assist or automation.

Week 3, build the smallest version.

One workflow, instrumented, with a human checkpoint before anything ships. Resist the urge to boil the ocean. Get one thing working.

Week 4, measure and decide.

Did it save real hours? Keep it, write it down, pick the next one. The compounding across months is the entire point.

04

Five mistakes that waste the budget

- > Buying tools before mapping the workflow. You end up with software looking for a problem.
- > Automating a broken process. Now it's broken faster, and harder to see.
- > Publishing raw AI output. Readers can tell, and so can search engines. Finish by hand.
- > Chasing volume over fit. A hundred mediocre posts lose to ten that sound like you.
- > Treating AI as a one-off project. It's a capability you build into how the team works, not a box you tick.

05**Build vs buy**

Buy when it's a commodity. Scheduling, basic copy assists, off-the-shelf analytics. No advantage in building what everyone already has.

Build when it's your edge. A tool wired to your own data, a feature your customers feel, a workflow no competitor has. When it's the thing that sets you apart, owning beats renting. You keep the asset, and the moat.

The honest middle: most teams should buy the boring 80 percent and build the 20 percent that's actually theirs.

CHECKLIST

The one-page checklist

- ☐ We've written down our recurring marketing tasks and flagged the repetitive ones.
- ☐ We picked one high-volume, low-judgment task to start with.
- ☐ We shipped the smallest working version, with a human checkpoint.
- ☐ We measured the hours saved before scaling it.
- ☐ We finish AI-assisted work by hand before it goes out.
- ☐ We're building the parts that are our edge, and buying the rest.
- ☐ We treat this as a capability, and we're already eyeing the next task.

Want this built with you, not just advised?

That's what we do. We design the strategy, the brand, and the AI tools as one system you own, then help your team run it. If that sounds like the studio you've been looking for, start a conversation.

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