# Shelly Palmer addresses the future of AI in marketing at CES 2025



During the Consumer Electronics Show 2025, Shelly Palmer, a renowned advisor, academic, and author, delivered a thought-provoking keynote address at the Innovation Series Breakfast that scrutinised the current state and future trajectory of artificial intelligence (AI) in marketing and broader business practices. Palmer initiated his remarks by stating, “First of all, this is the weirdest CES I’ve ever been at... And the reason is, it’s a super hot mess.” His observation reflected a chaotic atmosphere at the show, indicative of competing visions and a lack of clear direction in the technological landscape.

Palmer outlined a significant shift in marketing paradigms, asserting, “Every single marketer in this room is going to be marketing to bots.” He explained that the focus of marketing strategies is transitioning from individual consumers to various personas associated with devices. He elaborated that modern devices can embody multiple personas—“maybe I’ll have a private persona. Maybe I’ll have a dating persona,”—and that these digital avatars will become the targets for marketers, replacing the traditional ad ID identifiers.

He stressed that businesses must adapt to the advancements in AI-driven “agentic systems,” which are increasingly assuming decision-making roles and refining user profiles. Palmer warned that reliance on traditional workflows is becoming obsolete, stating, “If you’re not ready, you’ll be left behind.” His insights into the operational shifts hint at a larger trend towards super-automated processes and multi-agent systems in business environments.

Furthermore, Palmer raised concerns about the future of search engines, particularly Google, which he posited is facing an existential challenge. “It is the end of link-based search. This is absolutely right – Google’s killed themselves,” he remarked, identifying AI summarising tools like ChatGPT as alternatives that satisfy users' needs without navigating through traditional advertising or links. He noted that platforms providing direct answers sacrifice click-through rates, which fundamentally disrupts the existing advertising ecosystem.

A notable part of the keynote was his examination of the artistic process versus execution in the age of AI. “We make a gigantic mistake in our society. We conflate creativity and execution,” Palmer said, indicating that while AI may excel at execution, human creativity remains paramount. He illustrated this point with visuals contrasting an expressive oil painting and a technically proficient yet uninspired reproduction, prompting the audience to rethink their role in a world increasingly influenced by automated execution.

Palmer also placed current technology trends in a historical context, pinpointing November 30, 2022, as a crucial marker—the “CG boundary.” He asserted that this date signifies a major shift in how content is created, stating, “We are no longer the sole writers of our own history and we never will be again.” He cautioned against the potential dangers of monoculturalism spawned by generative technologies, highlighting a need for diverse perspectives in the creation of digital content.

As he wrapped up his address, Palmer presented a vision for the future that includes both monumental challenges and tantalising innovations. He queried the sustainability and viability of training AI systems, addressing concerns about energy consumption that have led companies like Meta to explore nuclear energy. “Is the future large language models and hyperscalers spending billions of dollars... or is the future a 14-year-old... coming up with a way to train a model that’s equal to GPT-4?” The ambiguity surrounding these questions underlined the complexity of navigating technological advancements.

Concluding his keynote, Palmer emphasised the necessity for leadership in adapting to the rapid evolution of technology, stating, “Stop thinking about AI as a technology issue. It’s a leadership issue.” He urged the audience to embrace innovations in workflow and execution without conflating creativity with mechanistic processes, leaving those in attendance to reflect on the profound ramifications of these emerging technologies in shaping the futures of their businesses and the broader society.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://shellypalmer.com/ai/> - This link supports Shelly Palmer's expertise and work in AI, including his workshops and keynotes on the subject, which aligns with his role as a renowned advisor and author.
2. <https://shellypalmer.com/2025/01/ces-2025-ai-everywhere-all-at-once/> - This article discusses the pervasive influence of AI at CES 2025, including the shift towards superautomation and agentic systems, which corroborates Palmer's remarks on the future of AI in marketing and business.
3. <https://shellypalmer.com/speaking/> - This page lists Shelly Palmer's speaking topics and engagements, including his focus on AI, machine learning, and digital transformation, which supports his role as a keynote speaker at CES 2025.
4. <https://shellypalmer.com/2025/01/ces-2025-ai-everywhere-all-at-once/> - This article highlights the impact of AI on content creation and consumption, as well as the role of generative AI tools, which aligns with Palmer's discussion on the artistic process versus execution in the age of AI.
5. <https://shellypalmer.com/ai/> - This link provides details on Shelly Palmer's workshops, including those on generative AI and AI strategy, which supports his insights into the operational shifts and the need for businesses to adapt to AI-driven systems.
6. <https://shellypalmer.com/2025/01/ces-2025-ai-everywhere-all-at-once/> - This article discusses the future of search engines and the impact of AI summarizing tools like ChatGPT, which corroborates Palmer's concerns about the future of search engines and the advertising ecosystem.
7. <https://shellypalmer.com/speaking/> - This page outlines Shelly Palmer's expertise in various technological areas, including AI, machine learning, and data-driven decision making, which supports his authority on the topics discussed in his keynote.
8. <https://shellypalmer.com/2025/01/ces-2025-ai-everywhere-all-at-once/> - This article mentions the historical context of technology trends and the 'CG boundary,' which aligns with Palmer's remarks on the significant shift in content creation and the role of generative technologies.
9. <https://shellypalmer.com/ai/> - This link details Shelly Palmer's workshops on AI strategy and workflow innovation, which supports his emphasis on the necessity for leadership in adapting to the rapid evolution of technology.
10. <https://shellypalmer.com/2025/01/ces-2025-ai-everywhere-all-at-once/> - This article discusses the integration of AI across various industries and the need for businesses to design systems that learn, adapt, and evolve, which corroborates Palmer's vision for the future and the importance of leadership in technology adaptation.
11. <https://shellypalmer.com/speaking/> - This page highlights Shelly Palmer's upcoming speaking engagements and his focus on topics such as AI, digital transformation, and responsible innovation, which supports his ongoing role as a thought leader in the tech industry.
12. <https://www.thedrum.com/news/2025/01/08/marketing-bots-welcome-the-agentic-era> - Please view link - unable to able to access data