

JANUARY 2025 ISSUE

# FLUME DIGITAL DIARY



## GREETINGS FELLOW SEEKERS AND DECODERS

The digital landscape is our Renaissance – a canvas constantly in flux, where hidden codes shape the future. In 2025, brands must become more than players; they must become **decoders**, unlocking the secrets buried within shifting algorithms and consumer behaviours.

But before we decipher what lies ahead, we must examine the **clues** left behind. Let's decode the patterns, the whispers of change that defined 2024. After all, the past holds the keys to the future.



ARE YOU READY  
TO CRACK THE CODE?



## RECAPPING THE CRYPTIC TRENDS OF 2024

2024's explosive digital evolution unveiled secrets – clues hidden in algorithms, AI breakthroughs, and creative innovations. Let's decode the most compelling trends that reshaped the year:

**(PS A HIDDEN MESSAGE IS LURKING WITHIN THESE PAGES. CAN YOU FIND IT? DISCOVER, DECODE... WIN!)**



ARE YOU READY  
TO CRACK THE CODE?



# RECAPPING THE CRYPTIC TRENDS OF 2024

## SOCIAL

### META-THREADS CROSSPOSTING 🔄

A seamless bridge was forged between Threads, Facebook, and Instagram, simplifying the art of sharing and amplifying reach.

### YOUTUBE & AI-GENERATED CONTENT 🎯

Spotter Studio emerged as a creator's secret weapon. It's an AI-powered muse that analyses video history to craft top-performing thumbnails, brainstorm ideas, and map success.

### PINTEREST'S NEW REMIX SHARING OPTIONS 🎨

The Remix Renaissance is here: Pinterest lets users transform collages into watermarked videos, for sharing across platforms.

## AI

### META'S LLAMA AI RECEIVES A MAJOR UPGRADE 🤖

Llama evolved into a polymath. With multimodal capabilities, it now interprets text, audio, and images — shaping more intuitive, versatile AI.

### GOOGLE EXPANDS ITS VIRTUAL TRY-ON AI TOOL ☀️

Dresses entered the fitting room of the future. With the power of AI, you can see how items look on different body types, including realistic details like shadows and drapes.

### SEVERAL AI UPDATES FOR GOOGLE ADS 🌊

AI took the reins at Google Ads, offering smarter asset creation, refined parameter controls, and deeper insights.





# HIGHLIGHTS

## AI NEWS ROUNDUP – CRACKING THE CODE IN 2025

### META-POWERED SEARCH ENGINE ON ITS WAY?

Meta charts its own course, aiming to cut ties with Bing by developing a proprietary search engine to fuel its AI chatbot.

### CHATGPT AN AI-POWERED WEB SEARCH ENGINE

Expect to see more real-time search results as the AI chatbot integrates web search into its interface. Welcome to the age of instant answers!

### APPLE INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALLY OUT

Apple makes a splash in the AI arena, unveiling tools for smarter writing, enhanced focus mode, revamped Siri (now with text input), and refined notifications.

## SOCIAL SPILLS – THERE’S A NEW CODE IN TOWN

### FACEBOOK SHIFTS METRICS TO VIEWS 1 2 3 4

Mirroring Instagram’s streamlined approach, views now take centre stage as Facebook consolidates metrics for clearer insights.

### YOUTUBE SHORTS AD FORMATS

Short and sweet wins the race: Google introduces new ad formats tailored for the Shorts universe, blending trend-savvy content with targeted impact.

### RUMOUR HAS IT: ADS ON THREADS?

Threads may soon become fertile ground for ads, with rumours that monetisation options will launch early next year.





FROM AI TO SOCIAL, THE DIGITAL LANDSCAPE IS CREATING ITSELF ANEW 🎨

FROM NICHE PLATFORMS MAKING WAVES TO NEW PLATFORMS ENABLING NEW PLAYGROUNDS TO PLAY 🦋

THE QUESTION IS:

**WILL YOU ADAPT AND THRIVE – OR STAND STILL AS THE FUTURE RACES FORWARD?**

**STOP SCROLLING,  
START SLEUTHING**

# AI NEWS BLAST

01





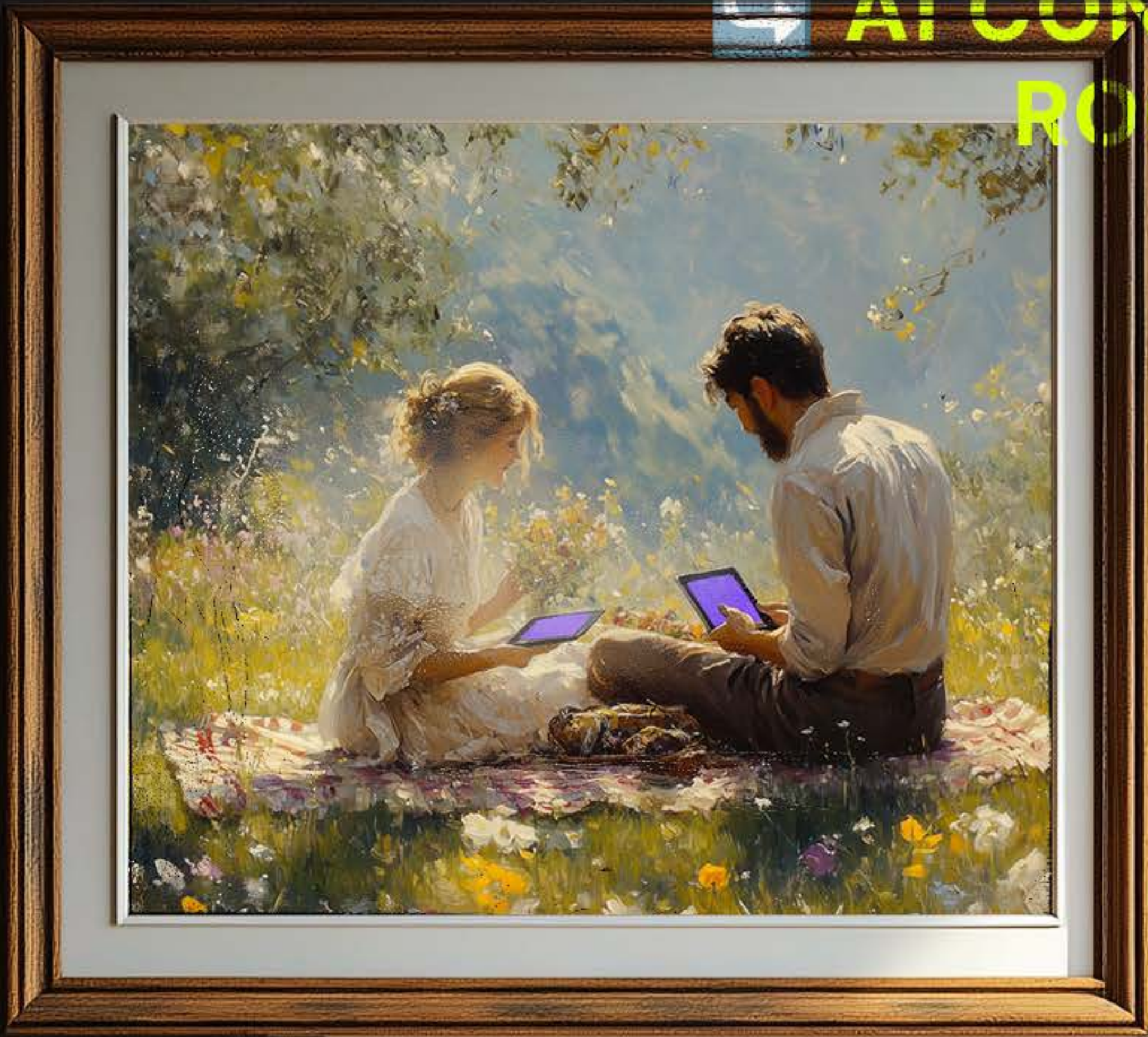
# AI CONTINUES TO ROCK THE BOAT



★ WELCOME TO THIS MONTH'S AI NEWS BLAST, WHERE AI MEETS ITS MAKER: "SEARCH"

This month, we delve into the latest breakthroughs such as the long-awaited release of Apple's AI. From Meta teasing into developing its own search engine to Perplexity AI building one and enabling consumers to buy directly from the platform, discover how AI is changing search and what this means for your product discoverability strategy.

The rules of the search game are being rewritten. Ready to uncover the clues?





# AI NEWS BLAST

## META SEARCH ENGINE IN THE WORKS? 🤖

Meta's rumoured plan to launch an independent search tool for its AI could sever ties with Google and Microsoft's Bing. This move would give Meta independence if these companies, both competitors in generative AI, end their partnerships.

**Flume Focus:** As "social SEO" rises, brands must ensure they're discoverable in Meta AI searches. With our help, stay visible, stay relevant.

## APPLE INTELLIGENCE FINALLY OUT 📱

Apple has introduced its long-awaited AI tool, Apple Intelligence, with features released across the iPhone, iPad, and Mac. While still in its early stages, the release includes starter tools like generative AI-powered writing assistants that can summarise notes, adjust message tones to be more professional or friendly, and convert text into lists or tables.

**Flume Focus:** Stay tuned for the next set of updates.

## OPENAI'S SEARCH ENGINE LIVE IN CHATGPT 🔍

ChatGPT is officially an AI-powered web search engine, which means that it can now show live search results in its conversations. The feature allows users to either manually or automatically access web results based on queries, similar to Google Search. It's also currently available to paid subscribers, with free, enterprise, and education users gaining access soon.

**Flume Focus:** Like with Meta's pending search engine, this update means a possible change to how users engage with search platforms and while there's no indication of advertising opportunities being introduced, this still serves as a gold mine. Why? It's another place for brands like yours to show up.





# AI NEWS BLAST

## PERPLEXITY'S AI SEARCH ENGINE BUYS PRODUCTS FOR YOU (US ONLY) 🛒

Perplexity AI's "Buy with Pro" feature (US only) allows Pro subscribers to purchase products directly within its search engine. Pre-saved billing and shipping details streamline the process, creating an effortless shopping experience.

**Flume Focus:** Although not yet available in South Africa or even globally, this update highlights the potential of AI-powered search engines, especially for enhancing product discovery. It demonstrates how search platforms can offer a seamless experience and revolutionise online shopping.

## AUTOTUNE WHO? NVIDIA'S RESHAPING THE FUTURE OF AUDIO WITH FUGATTO 🎵

Imagine a world beyond autotune. NVIDIA's Fugatto AI tool creates entirely new sounds, from a cat-like trumpet to tones yet unheard, all from a simple text prompt. The era of limitless audio creativity is here.

**Flume Focus:** Think outside the sound box. Fugatto helps your brand craft unique audio identities, offering endless potential for jingles, immersive ads, and sonic branding.





## DECIPHERING THE FUTURE

**AI is rewriting the rules of search, sound, and shopping!**

We've unveiled some tasty secrets, just for you – from Apple Intelligence to Meta's rumoured search engine to Perplexity shopping for people.

Now you need to decide:  
Which to use, how to use, and when to join the future?

**Reach out, let's decode all this together.**

**KEEP SEARCHING...  
EVERY WORD MATTERS**



# SOCIAL MEDIA'S SECRETS REVEALED



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STEP INTO THE CRYPTIC CORRIDORS OF SOCIAL MEDIA'S LATEST EVOLUTION. HIDDEN IN THIS MONTH'S UPDATES ARE CLUES TO A SHIFTING DIGITAL REALITY WHERE INFLUENCE IS REDEFINED, INNOVATION REDRAWNS THE MAP, AND CHALLENGERS RISE FROM THE SHADOWS.

**THE QUESTION ISN'T WHAT'S CHANGED,  
IT'S HOW YOU'LL ADAPT.** 🔍



# SOCIAL MEDIA'S SECRETS REVEALED

## META

### TIME TO CUSTOMISE YOUR AI CHATS 🗨️

Meta might soon allow users to personalise its AI chatbot's responses with a "Memory" feature. This new option, reportedly found in the latest WhatsApp backend code, could enable the chatbot to refine its replies based on your preferences and past interactions.

**Flume Focus:** This update could present to you opportunities to align your messaging with user-specific preferences, potentially improving engagement and customer satisfaction.

## THREADS

### SEARCH, VIDEO VIEWING, AND TRENDS UPDATES 📊

Threads strengthens its game with AI-driven trends. It's upped its search filters, which simplifies finding posts, particularly for social media managers. Viewing landscape video and visuals-focussed content like sports highlights is now more refined. As its competitor Bluesky looms, Threads is sharpening its edges, simplifying discovery and elevating storytelling tools for users and brands alike.

**Flume Focus:** Let's simplify your reporting with cohesive metrics that make performance insights across platforms crystal clear.



# SOCIAL MEDIA'S SECRETS REVEALED

## FACEBOOK

### SWITCH TO VIEWS AS PRIMARY METRIC

Facebook is consolidating its content performance metrics to align with Instagram by using views as the primary measure for all content types, including reels, videos, photos, and posts. This unified metric tracks how many times content appears on a screen, including repeat views.

**Flume Focus:** While the metrics are still relatively the same, this update will help streamline data analysis across content types, enhancing reporting efficiency.



## INSTAGRAM

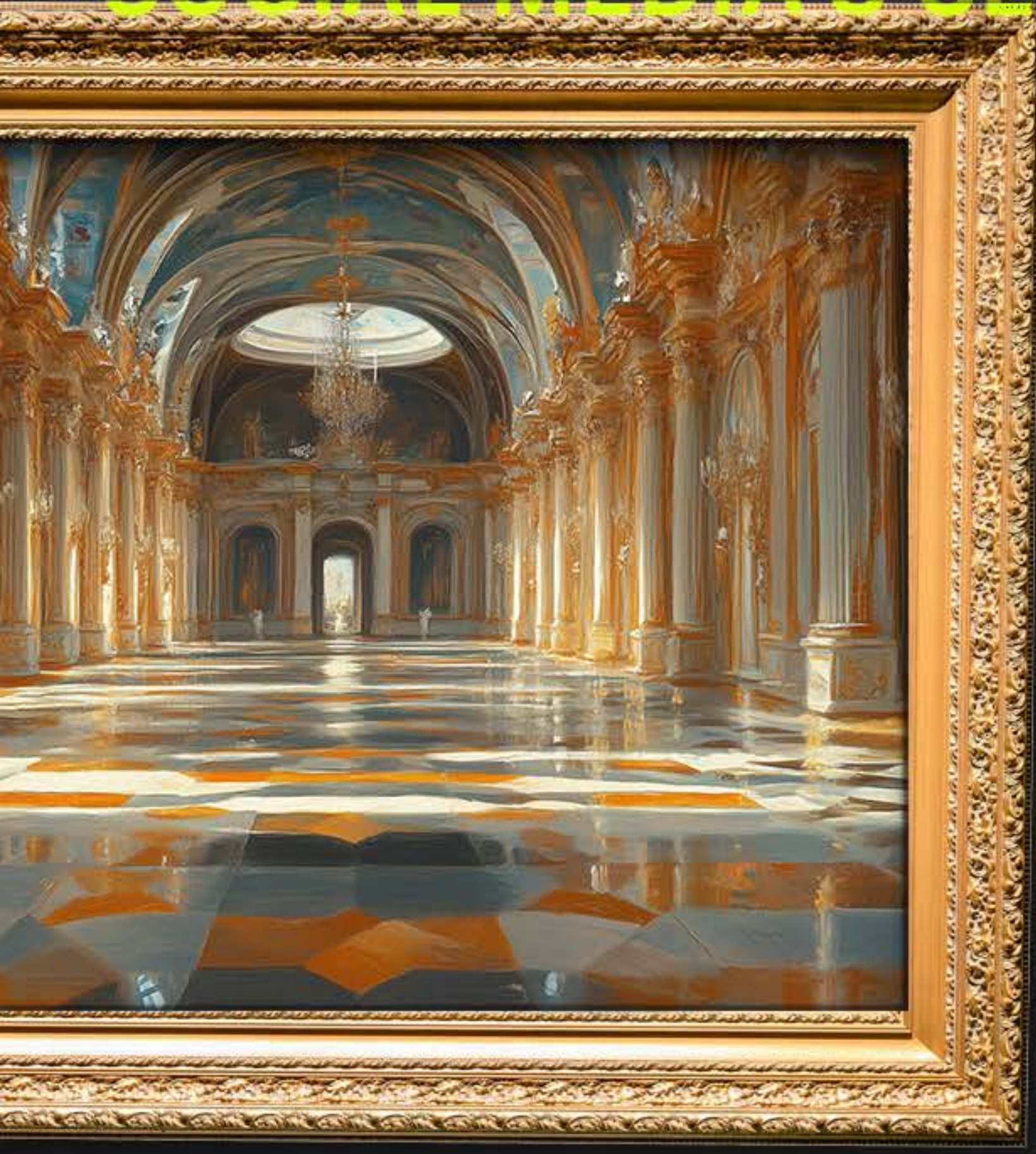
### "COLLAGE" OPTION FOR STORIES

Instagram is testing a new collage feature for Stories, allowing users to combine images from their camera roll in a more free-form way... which is not new. Previously Instagram had the grid layout option. But this new feature offers greater flexibility in creating personalised designs, encouraging more creative and engaging content for Stories.

**Flume Focus:** Use this update to share post-event story highlights that are quicker, more engaging, and truly interactive – without overwhelming your followers.



# SOCIAL MEDIA'S SECRETS REVEALED



## TIKTOK

### FANCY A VIRTUAL CREATOR TWIN? 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻

TikTok could enable creators to build AI bots in their likeness 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻 Based in China, Douyin's "V Project" uses AI to let creators generate lifelike virtual avatars that engage with users through comments, DMs, and live streams in their style, while maintaining a consistent online presence. Popular as they are in China, these avatars haven't gained traction in Western markets.

**Flume Focus:** Virtual avatars could help you maintain a consistent 24/7 online presence, managing communities and driving engagement. However, creators must ensure AI-generated responses are of a high quality. We also need to be mindful of the potential pitfalls of this tool.

### NEW GEN AI VIDEO CREATION TOOLS FOR MARKETERS 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻

TikTok has introduced a new AI tool in its Symphony Creative Studio, enabling businesses to generate TikTok-style videos using product descriptions or URLs. This update aims to make it easier for brands to create TikToks in a way that looks natural for the platform.

**Flume Focus:** With this update, smaller brands with more conservative budgets can create (decent) TikTok content more efficiently and quickly.



# SOCIAL MEDIA'S SECRETS REVEALED

## LINKEDIN

### LEAD GEN OBJECTIVE & BOOSTED POSTS 🗝️

LinkedIn now lets users choose "Lead Generation" as an objective for boosted posts, alongside the existing reach and engagement options. This new feature allows simplified ad setup with budget and targeting options, plus a lead form template, helping businesses build contact lists and gain audience insights.

**Flume Focus:** Let's get you gaining leads easily and directly from boosted posts by streamlining the process without needing complex ad setups. The result? You're closer to your target audience, more quickly and more efficiently.

## YOUTUBE

### GOOGLE ANNOUNCES NEW SHORTS-FOCUSED AD OPTIONS 📺

YouTube is enhancing Shorts ads with new options to help brands boost engagement. These include sticker ads that showcase a product carousel when tapped and animated image ads that display popping product images. Brands can also now run campaigns exclusively in the Shorts feed or use horizontal creatives with new format buying controls.

**Flume Focus:** Maximise your reach and engagement with the new YouTube Shorts ad formats and enjoy creative flexibility to showcase your product in fresh and interactive ways.





## **DIGITAL DOMINATION DECODED**

The social media scene can feel like a labyrinth, where the power lies with only those who can decode its secrets. From TikTok's AI twins to Meta's personalised chats, innovation is the cipher, and engagement is the prize.

Will you wield Instagram collages or LinkedIn lead gen capabilities to unlock influence?

**The digital game has evolved – your move.**

**TAKE A BEAT – STOP SCROLLING  
AND START SLEUTHING**

# ⚡ UNLOCKING THE DIGITAL CIPHER WITH FLUME 🤖

A cryptic masterpiece, akin to the puzzles of the Da Vinci Code, demands bold, innovative thinking.

While some things remain constant, new, uncharted paths are emerging, demanding more courage and creativity than ever before.

Luckily, Courage and Creativity are our middle names.

In 2025, let's thrive by using these changes instead of just surviving – together, we'll unlock the secrets that lead to greater growth.

Here's to decoding the new year, one breakthrough at a time. 🥂





## PS DID YOU CRACK THE CODE HIDDEN IN THIS DIGITAL DIARY?

Then email the correct phrase to [hello@flume.co.za](mailto:hello@flume.co.za) with the subject line "Winner Winner Chicken Dinner"

**Good luck and happy decoding!**

### Competition Rules:

The competition is limited to the first 10 correct responses we receive. Winners will receive a free SEO or Social Media Audit (specific details to be confirmed with winners). Submissions without the correct subject line or with incorrect responses will not be considered.

### Terms and Conditions:

- \*The competition is open to all Digital Diary viewers, excluding employees directly involved in the creation of the Digital Diary and their immediate families.
- \*Only the first 10 correct responses will qualify for the prize. The order of submissions will be determined by the timestamp on the email received at [hello@flume.co.za](mailto:hello@flume.co.za).
- \*Each participant may submit only one entry. Multiple entries from the same participant will be disqualified.
- \*Winners will be notified via email within 7 business days of submitting their entry.
- \*The free SEO or Social Media Audit must be redeemed within 3 months of the winner notification.
- \*The prize is non-transferable and cannot be exchanged for cash or any other services.
- \*Flume reserves the right to modify or cancel the competition at any time without prior notice. By participating, entrants agree to these terms and conditions.

