



AI Tools for Creatives: Cut Through the Noise

Brad Flaughter | Tools of the Trades Conference

A hands-on workshop for artists and makers navigating the AI landscape — what's real, what's hype, and how to keep your creative edge.

Addressing FOMO — You Don't Need to Try Everything.

Key Points:



1. Set a **“token budget”** for time and money.



2. Dedicate **“20% time”** to exploration.



3. After that, **just chill**. There are a billion tools out there, not every one is for you



Rock, Paper, Scissors – Three AI-Powered Creative Strategies



ROCK = Original IP

- Hard to manufacture
- massive upside
- big investment



PAPER = Handmade & Unique

- Prove it's unique
- find your "whale"
- authenticity is the product



SCISSORS = Knock-offs & Remixes

- Fair-use
- fan art
- creative homage

What Should You Automate? It Depends on Your Strategy.

ROCK & SCISSORS



Automate the whole stack
(design, production, marketing).
AI is your co-pilot.

PAPER (Handmade)



Core craft stays human.
Automate the edges
(marketing, admin, outreach).

Know your lane. Automate what doesn't dilute your brand.

Automate the Boring Stuff

Marketing


- Flyers, stickers, social media, websites
- Google Nano Banana, Manus, Lovable


Admin

- Invoicing, form-filling, taxes
- Manus



Live Makeovers — Let's Build Something Useful.

 **Time to put tools to work!**
Attendees will try and create one useful AI work product.

 **We'll look at examples from Brad using:**

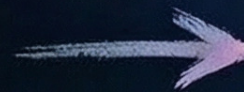
 Gemini  Manus  Lovable

 **What can AI help with?**

- Better copy, sharper visuals, better storytelling and more — all without losing the maker's voice.



BEFORE



AFTER

Standing Out When AI Content Is Everywhere — Costly Signaling.

1. Differentiate through “costly signaling” — doing things that are hard to fake.
2. Angelo’s Pizza: No online ordering, always a line. Scarcity signals quality.
3. Carroll Tax: Referral-only. Exclusivity creates demand.
4. The OKCupid Lesson: Being polarizing beats being average.
5. Be weird. Be unavailable to some. Let your human story and physical craft be what AI can’t replicate.



Key Takeaways and Q&A

- 1. Set a token budget and 20% time.
- 2. Know your strategy: Rock, Paper, or Scissors.
- 3. Automate the boring stuff.

Useful Links

Manus: <https://manus.im>

Google AI Studio: <https://aistudio.google.com/>

Google Gemini: <https://gemini.google.com>

Lovable: <https://lovable.dev/>

Handy: <https://handy.computer/>