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CASE STUDY · MARLUC SYNOPSIS

Heineken Freddyai marketing platform

IMPLEMENTED 2025 ONWARDS · MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRIAL · NETHERLANDS · BAND C · CLAIMED ONLY

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Heineken introduced Freddyai, an AI-powered virtual marketing agency, in 2025. In May 2026 it consolidated its global agency roster, describing the move as part of its Freddyai commercial transformation. No results are published.

ABOUT THIS SYNOPSIS

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Facts and figures are as reported by the sources listed below, which may be incomplete, self-reported or out of date. Check the original source before relying on any figure.

The impact band, proof marker and SEAM view are MarLuc's opinion. The organisation is not a MarLuc client and has not reviewed or endorsed this synopsis. Names and trademarks belong to their owners.

NOTICE WORDING LAST UPDATED 16 NOVEMBER 2026

AT A GLANCE

AI used: Enterprise generative AI platform for marketing and sales: a virtual marketing agency and brand-building platform.

Implemented: 2025 onwards. Grade: band C, Process change, Claimed only.

Headline result, as reported: Freddyai rollout "well ahead of plan" and global agencies consolidated, by Heineken's account; no results published

1 · The case

The facts, as reported by the 4 sources listed at the end. Where a source is silent, the field says "Not reported".

Organisation

Heineken N.V.. Dutch brewer, one of the world's largest, with over 87,000 employees and 2025 revenue of EUR 34.3 billion, by its results release. Global brands include Amstel, Birra Moretti, Desperados and Tiger alongside Heineken. Its strategy is called EverGreen 2030. Canvas block: 4. Operations and process. Also 3. Customers and proposition, 7. Suppliers and partners.

Business challenge

The challenge. Not reported in the AI context. Heineken describes Freddyai as improving efficiency and reducing costs while giving local teams more time for creativity and brand-building.

How it was addressed. Heineken introduced Freddyai in 2025 and says rollout is well ahead of

Who implemented it

In-house (In-house): Built and runs Freddyai as an internal commercial AI platform.
Agencies named in the May 2026 announcement (Publicis, WPP, Stagwell, Dentsu) are the global agency partners, not reported as builders of Freddyai.

Technology (SEAM pillar E)

SEAM types: not established; the sources do not say how the system works. Deployment: Not reported. Vendors and products: Freddyai.

Where it was built in: An internal commercial AI platform for sales and marketing teams, combining generative AI with internal brand knowledge and consumer data, per trade press.

What changed

Before: Heineken used a larger set of marketing agencies. After, by its account: Freddyai equips local teams with insights, execution and media planning, and the global agency set is smaller. How much work moved from agencies to Freddyai: Not reported. [1] [2] [3] [4]

What it cost

Not reported.

What it saved

Not reported. Heineken says Freddyai improves efficiency and reduces costs but gives no figure. Its group-wide programme reports gross savings of more than EUR 3.5 billion over five years, not attributed to Freddyai. [1] [2] [3] [4]

Governance and control

No governance arrangements for Freddyai are described in the sources opened.

S2 · Accountable owner · Claimed
Chief Commercial Officer Bram Westenbrink announced the agency changes and linked them to the Freddyai commercial transformation; a named owner for Freddyai itself is not reported. [4]

A1 · Safe use · Not reported
Not reported.

A2 · Human in the loop · Not reported
Review of Freddyai outputs: Not reported.

A3 · Monitoring and assurance · Not reported
Monitoring of results: Not reported; Heineken says rollout is "well ahead of plan". [1]

A4 · Vendor AI · Not reported
Not reported.

A5 · Agent controls · Not reported
No agents described.

A6 · Standards and regulation · Not reported
Not reported.

What worked, what did not, what is unproven

WORKED

– Heineken says Freddyai rollout is progressing well ahead of plan.

DID NOT

– No outcome figures for Freddyai are published.

UNPROVEN

– Cost savings or sales effect of Freddyai: Not reported.

– How far the agency consolidation was driven by AI rather than by the wider efficiency programme: Not reported.

– Whether most markets are onboarded by the end of 2026, covering about 80% of marketing and selling investment, as planned.

– Quality of Freddyai output: Not reported.

Timeline

2025 Heineken introduces Freddyai, its AI-powered virtual marketing agency and brand-building platform [1]

Feb 2026 Full year results: Freddyai rollout "well ahead of plan"; most markets to be onboarded by end 2026 [1]

May 2026 Heineken announces a smaller global agency roster, which it calls part of its Freddyai commercial transformation [4]

2 · Grade and SEAM assessment

MarLuc's opinion, made on the evidence above. How cases are graded: marluc.co.uk/case-studies/how-we-rate

Level of change and impact

Claimed: B. Grade: C, Process change. Proof: Claimed only. Level of change: Process change.

Process change (Level 2, band C). Heineken calls the move to fewer agency partners part of its Freddyai commercial transformation (claimed band B, a change in suppliers); the sources do not show what work moved to Freddyai or what it changed.

Freddyai supports marketing and sales teams with insights, media planning and content, and Heineken has consolidated its agency roster, which it links to Freddyai (band C, process change). Heineken calls the move to fewer agencies part of its Freddyai commercial transformation (claimed band B, a change in suppliers), but no source shows what AI changed in cost, roles or results, and the agency review sits within a wider efficiency programme.

The SEAM view and lessons learnt

Heineken's own account links Freddyai to efficiency, a leaner agency model and a wider operating model change, but no result separates the AI from the group efficiency programme and the agency review. A leadership team should ask what has measurably moved from agencies

1. Say which results the AI platform produced, separately from the wider efficiency programme.
2. Measure the work moved in-house against the agency cost it replaced.
3. Publish quality checks, not just rollout speed.

Evidence

Score 1 of 4. Self-reported: Heineken's results release and agency release; trade press repeats them.

Evaluation method. Self-reported company statements: results release and agency release. No outcome measures published.

Status. Ongoing: Heineken planned to onboard most markets by the end of 2026, by its February 2026 results release.

3 · Original sources

Read these in full. To challenge a fact or a grade, use the contact form at marluc.co.uk or the link on https://marluc.co.uk/case-studies/heineken-freddy-ai-marketing

[1] Heineken N.V.: Reports 2025 Full Year Results (media release, 11 February 2026)
https://ml-eu.globenewswire.com/Resource/Download/b59c46f2-b620-4e4b-a8eb-44cf592cefe8

[2] EFA News: Heineken marks a change in... marketing
https://www.efanews.eu/item/59926-heineken-marks-a-change-in-marketing.html

[3] inside.beer: Netherlands: Heineken Puts Freddy AI at the Heart of Global Marketing
https://www.inside.beer/news/detail/netherlands-heineken-puts-freddy-ai-at-the-heart-of-global-marketing

[4] HEINEKEN N.V.: Heineken appoints new global marketing agencies to drive next phase of brand growth (media release, 8 May 2026)
https://ml-eu.globenewswire.com/Resource/Download/fcc95b58-dd4e-42c0-a85d-6b0617fcc586

Heineken N.V. website: https://www.theheinekencompany.com

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