

Transparency *by default.*

How European brands disclose AI imagery precisely from 2
August 2026, without losing trust or aesthetic standards.

A practical framework from Claibe

MARKETING · DESIGN · ARCHITECTURE · RETAIL

ENGLISH EDITION



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ABOUT THIS WHITE PAPER

A practical framework for brands, agencies and design teams working professionally with AI imagery.
It is not legal advice; sources and disclaimer are on page 22.

01 · EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Precision beats “made with AI”.

From 2 August 2026, new transparency requirements apply to the professional use of AI. The law does not require visible labelling of every AI image.

Visible disclosure becomes relevant when the content could create a false impression of precisely what AI has created or altered: a person, a product, a place or an event.

Claibe recommends disclosing material AI use as a matter of course: a simple margin of safety, a consistent practice and a more credible relationship with customers and audiences.

01

Regulatory risk

Failing to disclose visibly can be an infringement where the specific content constitutes a deepfake.

02

Communication risk

A generic AI notice can make real products and real projects look synthetic.

03

Brand risk

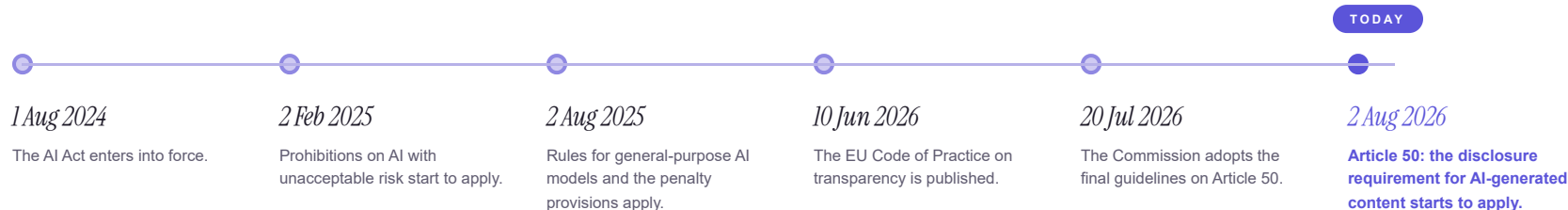
Unexplained AI use invites doubt when the customer discovers it later. Precise disclosure makes the use understandable from the outset.

CLAIBE RECOMMENDS

Disclose material AI use as a matter of course. Say what is real first, then what AI created or altered.

02 · THE TIMELINE

What applies *when*.



STATUS

The Commission adopted the final guidelines on 20 July 2026.

They are guidance only; only the Court of Justice of the EU can give a binding interpretation of the law. Article 50 applies from 2 August 2026.

NATIONAL OVERSIGHT

Each EU Member State designates its own national supervisory authorities, coordinated at EU level by the Commission's AI Office. Until national guidance is issued in your market, the EU Code of Practice serves as the practical reference.

DIGITAL OMNIBUS

The Digital Omnibus deferred the high-risk rules to 2027 and 2028. The transparency requirements in Article 50 still apply from 2 August 2026. Only a limited transition period, until 2 December 2026, applies to machine-readable marking in generative AI systems already on the market before 2 August 2026.

PART 01

The regulation.

What Article 50 requires, when an image is a deepfake, and why generic labelling fails.

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03 · WHAT THE LAW REQUIRES

What the law *requires*.

Article 50 requires clear and distinguishable disclosure when professionally deployed AI content legally constitutes a deepfake, no later than the recipient's first exposure to it.

A deepfake is AI-generated or AI-manipulated image, audio or video content that resembles an existing person, object, place, entity or event, and that could falsely appear authentic or truthful.

Using AI therefore does not automatically trigger a requirement to disclose visibly.

The guidelines pose a single question: what might the recipient falsely come to believe is authentic or truthful? The answer turns on three variables: what AI created or altered, what claim the image makes about precisely that, and what the reasonably foreseeable audience, including its composition, assumes to be real.

ARTICLE 99 Breaching the disclosure requirement can cost up to €15 million or 3% of global annual turnover, whichever is higher. For SMEs, the lower of the two applies.

WHO CARRIES THE RESPONSIBILITY

As a provider, Claibe is responsible for the technical transparency built into the system. Responsibility for the visible disclosure sits with the “deployer”, that is, the company using the AI system. The publishing company, the brand, the agency and the distribution partner may hold different roles depending on the specific use and decision-making process. Claibe supplies the tools and the technical marking. The specific use must be assessed by the deployer responsible for it.

THE LEGAL MINIMUM. THE CLAIBE STANDARD.

The law does not require visible disclosure on every AI image. Claibe still recommends that material AI use be disclosed precisely as a matter of course.



This image was created by AI as an interpretation of reality.
Please note that all people and products depicted are fictional.

04 · NUANCE

Advertising has always been *staged*.

Product photography, fashion campaigns, architectural visualisations and catalogues have always been staged. Light is set. Rooms are styled. Colours are graded. CGI is used.

AI does not change the fact that visual communication is a *representation*. What AI changes is the production apparatus: faster, cheaper, more flexible.

The guidelines make audience expectation part of the assessment itself. In advertising and catalogue work there may be cases where the recipient expects staged surroundings, and where a visualised setting therefore does not in itself amount to a false claim about a real place.

Depending on the circumstances, a real product can therefore be shown in an AI-visualised setting without automatically falling under the requirement to disclose visibly. Claibe still recommends a precise disclosure wherever AI has played a material role.

THE CORE OF THE TEST

What did AI change, and what might the recipient falsely believe is real?

05 · THE PROBLEM

Why generic labelling *fails*.

“*Made with AI.*”

“*AI generated.*”

“*Contains AI content.*”

The wording looks simple, but it rarely explains enough: a furniture brand placing a *real* chair in a visualised interior can leave the customer thinking the chair does not exist. And an architectural visualisation can sound as though AI designed the building, even when it is based on a real 3D model and AI only rendered it.

BETTER

“*The product is real. The setting is AI-visualised.*”

Often a voluntary disclosure, where the product itself is shown accurately. Claibe's precautionary approach does not mean labelling everything “AI generated”; it means explaining material AI use precisely.

06 · THE SAME TEST

Same test, two *outcomes*.

THE RISK LIES IN THE SETTING

An existing designer lamp is placed in an AI-visualised interior. AI created the setting, so what the recipient might misread is the setting. In advertising and catalogue work the audience arguably expects staged surroundings to some degree, and the lamp itself is shown accurately, so there is nothing to be mistaken about.

Claibe still recommends: “The product is real. The setting is AI-visualised.”

THE RISK LIES IN THE PRODUCT

If AI instead makes the product look better than it really is, with finer materials, cleaner light or improved properties, the risk attaches to the product itself: the object the image makes a factual claim about, and the one the customer bases a decision on. Here audience expectation offers no protection. The content may therefore constitute a deepfake, and visible disclosure may be required.

The same mechanism applies to place: present the interior as a real installation at a named hotel, and the image suddenly makes a factual claim about a place, and may therefore constitute a deepfake.

A disclosure does not by itself make a misleading product portrayal lawful.

07 · BEFORE AND AFTER

Same image, two *disclosures*.

Furniture campaign

BEFORE

"Made with AI"

The customer doubts the chair exists at all.



AFTER

"The product is real. The setting is AI-visualised."

STATUS · Should be disclosed under the Claibe standard.

Architecture

BEFORE

"AI-generated image"

Sounds as though AI designed the building.



AFTER

"The visualisation is based on an existing 3D model. AI was used for photorealistic rendering."

STATUS · Should be disclosed. The assessment depends on whether the image is presented as a visualisation or as documentation of a real place.

Synthetic person

BEFORE

"This image may contain AI elements"

Vague enough to cover everything, and explain nothing.



AFTER

"The person in this image is AI-generated."

STATUS · Should as a rule be disclosed clearly whenever a synthetic person appears to be a real human being who exists and did what is shown.

PART 02

The method.

One test, three variables and one decision: Claibe's four questions, the icons, and ten precise disclosures.

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08 · THE FRAMEWORK

Claibe's four *questions*.

One test, three variables, one decision: what AI changed, what claim the image makes, what the recipient expects, and how you disclose it precisely.

01

What did AI create or alter?

The setting, the styling, the light, the person or the way the product is rendered. What the recipient could misread is precisely what AI touched.

02

What claim does the image make about precisely that?

A catalogue setting does not claim to be a real place. A product rendering claims the product looks like this. A photorealistic person claims a human being exists and did what is shown.

03

Which audience is reasonably foreseeably exposed to the image, and what does that audience expect?

Context and expectation are among several elements in the legal assessment.

04

How should the use be disclosed?

Clearly, where the image could mislead about what it shows. Contextually, where AI played a material role. Usually not at all for minor technical corrections.

09 · THE EU ICONS

When the icons make sense.

The EU has developed three voluntary icon forms: a base icon, an icon for fully AI-generated content, and an icon for partly AI-modified content.

The icons are free to use, but the obligations in Article 50 are *not* optional, and the icons are not in themselves evidence of compliance.

GROUND RULE

Use the icons as a compact visual layer alongside precise wording, whether visible disclosure is required or you are following the Claibe standard.

The icon says AI was used. The wording explains what AI contributed.



Base icon

Where AI played a material role and you also use precise wording or an interactive information layer.

“The product is real. The setting is AI-visualised.”

AI GENERATED

Fully AI-generated

Where the whole of the image's core content was created with AI, with no human-made image elements beyond prompting and editorial direction.

“This image is fully AI-generated as a concept visualisation.”

AI MODIFIED

Partly AI-modified

Where existing, human-made content has been materially altered with AI in a way that could affect how the recipient understands it.

“This image is based on an existing photograph. The interior and styling were altered with AI.”

10 · CLAIBE'S ICONS

Why Claibe has its own *icons*.

The EU icons show that AI was used. Claibe's icon library explains how AI was used: disclosures designed for higher precision, and crafted well enough to belong on your images.

01 Customer-facing precision

The icons follow Claibe's disclosure types and speak the customer's language: what is real, what was generated, and what was altered.

02 Aesthetics that follow the brand

The disclosure lives on your images. So the icons are drawn as part of the image's expression, not as a warning stuck on top.

03 Flexible by default

You start from pre-designed icons and fine-tune the wording, colour, shape and placement yourself. The result can be saved as your standard mark.

FROM THE ICON LIBRARY

STARTING POINT

AI GENERATED

AI MODIFIED

ADAPTED TO YOUR EXPRESSION

AI VISUALISED

AI generated

PRODUCT IS REAL · SETTING IS AI

Same mark, your expression. The adjustments are saved as the standard for the whole team.

THE PRINCIPLE

Disclose as a matter of course, but always disclose precisely.

11 · IN THE PRODUCT

How it looks in *Claibe*.

The disclosure library keeps everything in one place: three steps from image to download.

01 Choose the disclosure
Pick the wording or icon that precisely describes the image's use of AI.

02 Adapt the wording
Claibe suggests a phrasing. Save it as the standard for the team.

03 Place it clearly
Adjust placement, size and opacity so the disclosure reads without dominating the image.



12 · DISCLOSURES

Ten precise *disclosures*.

One small system beats one long disclaimer. Pick the wording that matches the scenario, and keep it identical across channels.

MAY REQUIRE CLEAR DISCLOSURE

Where the alteration could create a false impression

SYNTHETIC PERSON

“The person in this image is AI-generated.”

PARTLY ALTERED PHOTOGRAPH

“This image is based on an existing photograph. The elements noted were altered with AI.”

ALTERED PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES

“The product is real. The materials or properties shown were visualised with AI.”

Note: disclosing the use of AI does not change the general rules on marketing and on how products and product attributes may be presented.

SHOULD BE DISCLOSED

AI played a material role, often with no legal requirement, because the audience expects staging

PRODUCT IMAGE

“The product is real. The setting is AI-visualised.”

CAMPAIGN WORLD

“The product is real. The surroundings were created with AI as part of the campaign’s visual world.”

ARCHITECTURE

“The visualisation is based on an existing 3D model. AI was used for photorealistic rendering.”

INTERIOR

“This image shows an AI-visualised interior based on the materials, products and style direction specified.”

FULLY AI-GENERATED CAMPAIGN

“This image is fully AI-generated as a creative campaign visualisation.”

CONCEPT

“This image is AI-generated as a concept visualisation. It shows one possible visual direction.”

VOLUNTARY METHOD NOTE

Minor technical editing

RETOUCHING

“AI was used for image enhancement, light adjustment and clean-up.”

Minor technical editing, such as cropping, colour correction, sharpening and dust removal, normally calls for no visible disclosure. The wording can be used voluntarily if you want to be fully open about the production method.

PART 03

In practice.

How precise disclosure becomes part of production rather than an extra task.

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13 · THE TWO LAYERS

Machine-readable marking and visible *disclosure*.

Layer 01

Machine-readable marking

Technical identification through metadata and provenance. Claibe embeds Content Credentials (C2PA) in relevant output, so a file's origin is technically verifiable through compatible tools wherever the marking has been preserved. The machine-readable marking requirement in Article 50(2) applies from 2 December 2026 to systems already on the market before 2 August 2026.

Claibe embeds Content Credentials today and has therefore implemented a central part of the technical solution ahead of the deadline. Overall compliance also depends on marking and detection working effectively, interoperably, robustly and reliably.

Layer 02

Visible disclosure

The wording, icon or watermark the recipient actually sees, and which must be perceivable without technical tools: the machine-readable marking cannot substitute for the visible disclosure. Legally required for deepfakes in scope, and Claibe's recommended starting point for material AI use. You control the wording, the mark and the placement.

THE EMERGING STANDARD

One technical trace. One precise disclosure. One documented internal decision.

Machine-readable marking and detection are the provider's technical layer. Visible disclosure is a separate, human layer. Claibe covers both, so you can focus on creating.

14 · CLAIBE'S POSITION

Disclosure by *default*.

The law does not require visible labelling of every AI image. Claibe still recommends disclosing material AI use as a matter of course.

The recommendation rests on a simple precautionary principle: the test is always the same, but the answer turns on three variables, what AI created or altered, what claim the image makes, and what the recipient assumes to be real. A settled practice of precise disclosure lifts that judgement call out of the pressure of an individual deadline, and builds an open, credible brand practice at the same time.

Disclosure should be proportionate: clear where the image could mislead, discreet and contextual for professional visualisations, and normally unnecessary for minor technical corrections.

THE PRINCIPLE

Disclose as a matter of course. Always disclose precisely.

REAL PRODUCT IN A VISUALISED SETTING

The product is shown accurately. The setting is fictional.

"The product is real. The setting is AI-visualised."

VIRTUAL STAGING

A real property, where AI added the furnishing.

"This image shows a real property. The furnishing and styling were added digitally with AI."

MATERIAL AI USE

AI created or altered the image's central subject, setting, person, product rendering or message. Minor technical corrections such as cropping, dust removal and ordinary colour correction normally do not count.

Say what is real first. Then say what AI contributed. AI-generated or AI-altered people are always called out directly in the wording.

15 · IN PRACTICE

Built into the *workflow*.

Transparency has to be easy to apply consistently. So the disclosure lives where images leave Claibe, in the download flow.

01

Suggested wording

Claibe suggests precise disclosures based on how the image is used. Choose one, adapt it, or use your organisation's standard.

02

One shared text library

The disclosures live in one shared library. When a colleague refines a phrasing, that refinement becomes the new standard for the whole organisation, consistent across every piece of material.

03

One default setting

Choose what happens when someone hits Download:

- ☒ **Disclose by default**
- ☐ Ask on every download
- ☐ Download without visible disclosure

CLAIBE RECOMMENDS

Choose “Disclose by default” for public-facing material where AI has played a material role. The setting governs the visible disclosure only. Machine-readable marking is handled separately.

16 · CHECKLIST

Before you *publish*.

01 Did AI create or materially alter the image's central content?

03 What claim does the image make about precisely what AI created or altered?

05 Could the image be read as documentation of a situation or event that never took place?

07 Does the law require the image to be disclosed clearly?

09 Does the wording explain precisely what is real and what AI contributed?

TIP In doubt, disclose. Use precise wording that protects what is real and explains what AI contributed.

02 What is real, and what did AI create or alter?

04 Which audience is reasonably foreseeably exposed to the image, and what does that audience expect — including any vulnerable groups?

06 Could the image create a false impression of how the product looks, what it does, or how it is used?

08 Should the image be disclosed under the Claibe standard?

10 Is the disclosure clear at first exposure, where disclosure is legally required?

BEFORE 2 AUGUST 2026 Content generated or manipulated and already made available before 2 August 2026 does not have to be labelled retrospectively. Content first published after that date should be assessed under the rules in force, even if it was produced earlier. The Commission continues to encourage voluntary labelling wherever possible. That aligns with the Claibe standard.

17 · CONCLUSION

Transparency as *workflow*.

Claibe is built for professional visual teams where AI is an integrated part of production. The law does not require visible labelling of every AI image. Claibe still recommends that material AI use be disclosed as a matter of course: a simple margin of safety, a consistent internal practice and a more open relationship with customers and audiences.

Disclose as a matter of course. Always disclose precisely.

Say what is real. Say what AI created or altered.

GET STARTED

Make disclosure part of your aesthetic and commercial standard. Use Claibe to document what is real, what was visualised, and what was altered.

claibe.com →

SOURCES

EU AI Act, Article 50, transparency obligations for providers and deployers.

EU AI Act, Article 99, administrative fines and penalties.

European Commission, Guidelines on the implementation of the transparency obligations under Article 50, C(2026) 5054, adopted 20 July 2026, in particular the sections on deepfakes and visible disclosure.

EU, Digital Omnibus Regulation, amending the AI Act, transitional rules for Article 50(2) and deferral of the high-risk rules.

European Commission, Code of Practice on Transparency of AI Generated Content, 10 June 2026.

European Commission, EU icons for labelling AI generated content.

European Commission, AI Act, overview of national competent authorities designated by each Member State.

This white paper distinguishes between legally mandatory visible disclosure and Claibe's recommended standard for precise disclosure. Any specific legal assessment depends on the image's content, use, context and expected audience. The white paper is a practical framework and does not constitute legal advice.