

Apple's latest iPad Pro ad sparks outrage for crushing creativity

Article

The news: Apple recently launched an iPad Pro advertisement that has sparked significant controversy—enough that **Apple apologized** in a statement to Ad Age, and said it no longer plans to run the spot.

- The ad featured a hydraulic press crushing various tools of creativity, such as musical instruments and books, to reveal the new device.
- This visual metaphor was intended to showcase the iPad's superiority and thinness but instead was perceived as an attack on artistic and human expression.
- The ad was quickly met with backlash across social media platforms, with viewers condemning its message as a celebration of the destruction of creativity and art.

Zoom out: The controversial "Crush!" campaign starkly contrasts with Apple's historically impactful advertisements, such as the 1984 "1984" ad, which celebrated individuality and creativity.

- This dissonance highlights a shift in messaging that could alienate core segments of Apple's audience.

Why it matters: The backlash is particularly poignant amid [growing anxieties about AI](#) and the potential for technology to replace human roles, especially in creative sectors.

- High-profile critics, including actors and filmmakers like **Hugh Grant** and **Justine Bateman**, voiced their concerns, emphasizing the ad's insensitivity and its portrayal of a tech-driven assault on cultural industries.
- Apple's choice of imagery in the ad struck a nerve with a global audience that is increasingly wary of the encroaching influence of technology on personal and professional spaces.
- This incident has reignited discussions on the balance between technological advancement and the preservation of human craftsmanship and artistic integrity.

The negative reception of the ad **raises questions about Apple's sensitivity and connection to the creative communities that have long been integral to its brand identity.** This event may prompt Apple to reassess how it communicates the value of its innovations without undermining the creative professions it aims to support.

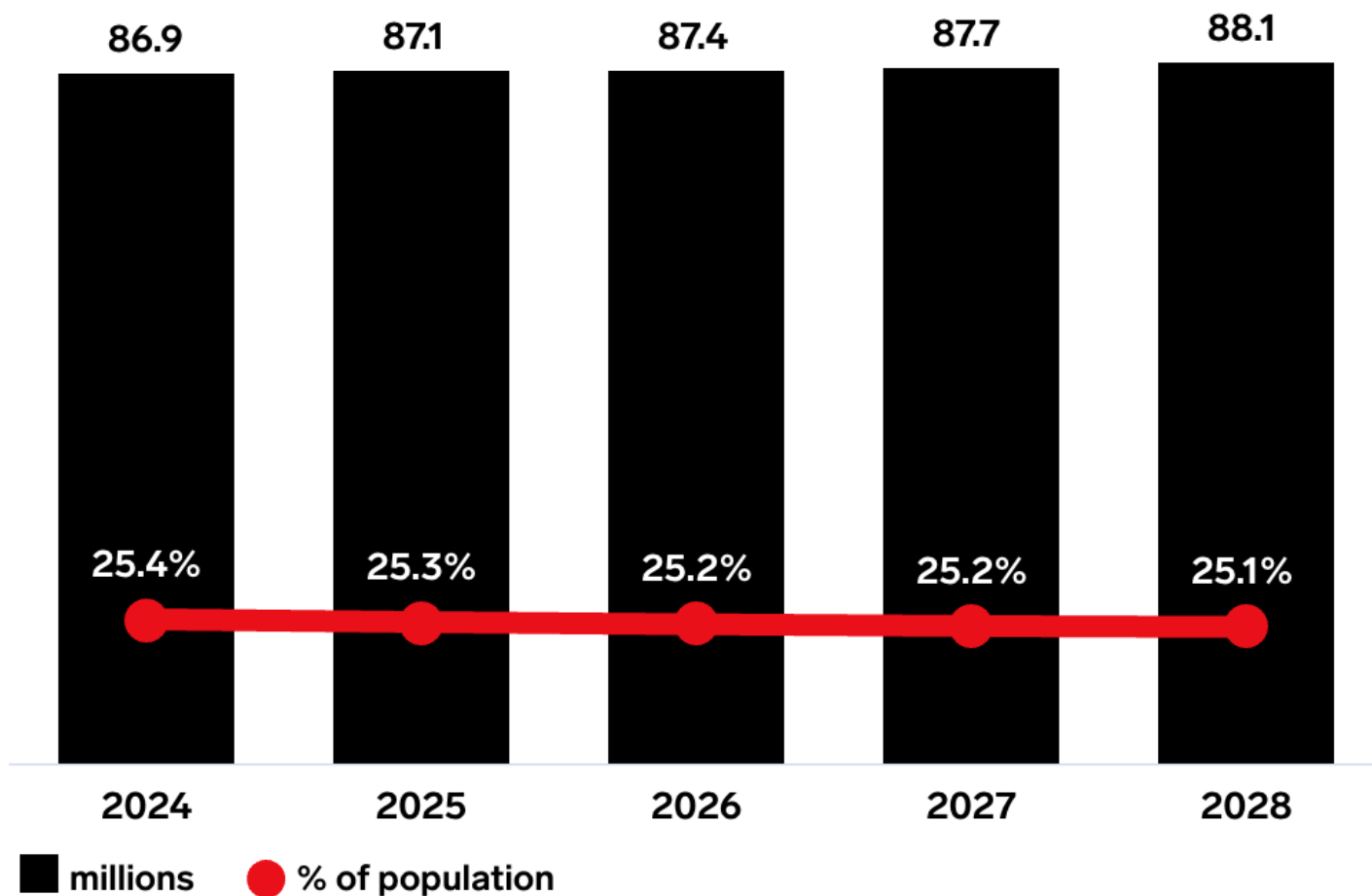
Our take: While Apple's intent was likely to highlight the technological prowess of the iPad Pro, the execution was flawed, leading to a rare public apology from the company.

- This situation serves as a reminder that even giant brands like Apple must tread carefully to align their marketing strategies with public sentiment and respect for the arts.

- The quick response to pull the ad and apologize shows a readiness to correct course, which is a positive takeaway for any corporation facing public scrutiny.
- With tablets a stagnant category for Apple, it's evident that the much-adored brand felt the need to push the envelope—but in this instance, it might have pushed too far.

iPad Users

US, 2024-2028



Note: individuals of any age who use an iPad at least once per month

Source: EMARKETER Forecast, February 2024