



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

315-Person Study Finds Most Viewers Can't Tell AI Video Editing From Human Editing, Yet Prefer It

Human-edited video won on engagement and trust, but 53.3% of viewers still mistook the AI-edited version for the human one.

BROADLANDS, Va., September 2, 2026 — Editvideo.io, a subscription-based video editing service, today released the results of an independent study testing whether everyday viewers can tell the difference between video edited by a professional human editor and video edited entirely by artificial intelligence.

The study showed 315 US-based respondents the same raw footage, edited two different ways: once by a professional human editor on Editvideo.io's team, and once entirely by Descript's Underlord AI co-editor, using a single prompt with no manual changes afterward. Respondents were asked which video they found more engaging, which felt more trustworthy, and finally, which one they believed was edited by a human.

The results showed a clear split. On the questions that measure how people actually respond to a video, the human edit won decisively: **78.7%** of respondents found it more engaging, and **63.2%** said it felt more trustworthy and made them more likely to subscribe.

But when respondents were asked to simply identify which video was human-edited, **53.3%**, a majority, got it wrong. They believed the AI-edited video was the human one.

"We didn't expect it to go both ways," said Usman Qamar, Co-Founder and CEO of Editvideo.io.

"Human editing still wins where it actually counts, holding attention and earning trust. But AI editing has gotten good enough that most people can't identify it anymore just by watching. That's a real shift, and we think it's worth being honest about, even though we're a company that sells human editing."

The study's most consistent finding was a reasoning pattern behind the wrong guesses: respondents overwhelmingly assumed that simpler, plainer editing meant a human had made it, and that more polished, graphics-heavy editing meant AI was involved. In this study, that assumption ran in the opposite direction. The human editor added branded motion graphics and highlighted captions, while the AI-edited version stayed deliberately minimal.

The pattern held regardless of education or income level. Respondents with a graduate degree were less accurate at identifying the human edit (34.8%) than those with a high school education (45.5%), and accuracy declined steadily as household income rose, from 51.8% among respondents earning under \$35,000 to 40.0% among those earning \$150,000 or more.

Editvideo.io designed the study to be transparent about its own commercial interest in the outcome. The full methodology, the AI prompt used, and the complete dataset are published alongside the results, including details the company says don't reflect well on the AI tool used, such as an early draft that dropped the video's closing call to action and had to be corrected.

The full report, including both original videos side by side, demographic breakdowns, and respondent quotes, is available at editvideo.io/ai-vs-human-video-editing-study.

About Editvideo.io

Editvideo.io is a subscription-based, done-for-you video editing service founded in 2019, serving YouTubers, coaches, podcasters, and businesses across the US, Canada, and Australia. The company offers both long-form and short-form video editing, pairing each client with a dedicated named editor and offering 24 to 48 hour turnaround, unlimited revisions, and no long-term contracts. Editvideo.io has served more than 1,800 clients with a team of 45 dedicated editors. The company is registered in New Castle, Delaware, with operations based in Virginia.

Media Contact

Usman Qamar

Co-Founder and CEO, Editvideo.io

Email: usman@editvideo.io

Website: editvideo.io

SOURCE: Editvideo.io

###