

AI MODELS FOR SHORT VIDEO AD GENERATION

Cut-Out Animation, Anime, Cinematic & UGC Styles | 2025 Report

Executive Summary

The AI video generation landscape has matured dramatically in 2025. Brands can now produce high-quality animated video ads — including cut-out animation, anime style, illustrated motion graphics, and UGC-style content — using AI models at a fraction of traditional production costs. This report evaluates 8 leading models based on animation style support, pricing, and real-world advertising use cases.

Key finding: No single model dominates all animation styles. Runway Gen-4.5 leads for professional cut-out restyling and VFX; Kling AI and Hailuo lead for anime and illustration styles; Creatify and HeyGen lead for scalable, automated ad production.

Quick Comparison Summary

Model	Starting Price	Animation Style	Best Ad Use Case
Runway Gen-4.5	\$12/mo	Cut-out restyling, VFX	High-end brand & commercial ads
Kling AI 2.6 / O1	\$6.99/mo	Anime, illustration, game CG	Character animation, mobile game ads
Pika Labs 2.5	\$8/mo	Surreal, stylized morphs	Viral social media ads
Hailuo AI 2.3	\$14.99/mo	Anime, ink painting, illustration	Budget anime-style explainer ads
DomoAI	~\$9.99/mo	Anime + cinematic dual style	Fashion & lifestyle brand content
Google Veo 3.1	\$9.99/mo*	Cinematic + native audio	Premium YouTube / CTV ads
Creatify	\$19/mo	UGC, animated product B-roll	E-commerce product ads at scale
HeyGen	\$29/mo	Talking avatar animation	Spokesperson & multilingual ads

* Veo 3.1 available from \$9.99/mo via third-party platforms such as ImagineArt. Native Google AI Ultra plan: \$249.99/mo.

Detailed Model Profiles

1. Runway Gen-4.5

Company	Runway
Animation Style	Cinematic, stylized, video-to-video restyling, motion-brush animation
Pricing	Free (125 credits/mo) Standard: \$12/mo Pro: \$28/mo Unlimited: \$76/mo
Best For	High-end commercial ads, cut-out restyling, professional VFX
Use Case	<i>A sneaker brand uses Runway Gen-4.5 video-to-video restyling to transform live product footage into a bold, cut-out graphic-novel style ad. Motion Brush animates specific elements (shoe swoosh, background shapes) independently, resulting in a 10-second TikTok/Instagram ad with a distinctive illustrated look — no animator required.</i>

Key Strengths:

- #1 benchmark score (Elo 1,247) — industry leader
- Video-to-video restyling: convert real footage into animation style
- Motion Brush: paint targeted movement on specific objects
- Camera motion controls (pans, zooms, dolly moves)
- Node-based workflow for chaining effects

2. Kling AI 2.6 / O1

Company	Kuaishou (China)
Animation Style	Cinematic realism, anime, illustration, ink painting, game CG, simultaneous audio-visual
Pricing	Free tier Standard: \$6.99/mo Pro: \$35/mo Premier: \$55/mo
Best For	Animation-style short ads, product demos, dynamic character movement
Use Case	<i>A mobile game studio uses Kling O1 to generate a 30-second animated video ad from a single character illustration. The Motion Brush tool animates the character running and jumping with physics-accurate movements, while the start/end frame control ensures the scene begins and ends on branded keyframes. The result is a polished animated ad exported directly to TikTok format.</i>

Key Strengths:

- Supports anime, illustration, ink painting, and game CG styles natively
- Motion Brush for precise character/object animation control
- Start/End Frame: specify exact first and last frames
- Up to 2-minute videos at 1080p / 30fps
- Kling O1 combines 18+ video tasks in one model

3. Pika Labs 2.5

Company	Pika Labs
Animation Style	Stylized, surreal, character-driven, creative effects (Pikaswaps, Pikaeffects)
Pricing	Free (80 credits/mo) Standard: \$8/mo Pro: \$28/mo Fancy: \$76/mo
Best For	Social media ads with quirky, viral character-driven animation
Use Case	<i>A beverage company creates a 5-second social ad where a cartoon character 'swaps' from normal into an animated cut-out version mid-scene using Pika's Pikaswaps feature. The stylized effect goes viral on Instagram Reels. Total production time: under 15 minutes. The ad style mirrors hand-cut paper animation without any manual design work.</i>

Key Strengths:

- Pikaswaps: morph between visual styles mid-clip
- Pikaeffects: apply cinematic effects to existing footage
- Ultra-fast 42-second renders
- Easy beginner interface — no learning curve
- Lip-sync and AI sound effects built-in

4. Hailuo AI (MiniMax) 2.3

Company	MiniMax (China)
Animation Style	Anime, illustration, ink painting, game CG, photorealistic — all in one model
Pricing	\$14.99/mo (Unlimited plan: \$29.99/mo)
Best For	Budget-conscious creators needing anime or illustration-style video ads
Use Case	<i>An e-learning platform needs animated explainer ads on a tight budget. Using Hailuo 2.3, they generate 10-second anime-style clips from product screenshots and text prompts. The illustration mode produces smooth, hand-drawn-looking animation that matches their brand book. Multiple style variants are A/B tested across Facebook and YouTube at a fraction of traditional animation costs.</i>

Key Strengths:

- 55% below industry average price point
- Native anime, illustration, ink painting style support
- Enhanced motion rendering with natural character movement

- Near-photorealistic lighting, shadows, and color in all styles
- Frequently cited as 'equivalent of Veo 2 for anime content'

5. DomoAI

Company	DomoAI
Animation Style	Anime, cinematic realism, viral motion templates, portrait animation
Pricing	Free tier available Paid plans from ~\$9.99/mo
Best For	Stylized animation ads, anime-style brand content, viral social templates
Use Case	<i>A fashion brand transforms a still product photo into a cinematic anime scene using DomoAI's image-to-video pipeline. The model adds natural head turns and expressive motion to the model in the photo, giving it a cut-out animated feel. Using built-in viral motion templates (like 'Hug' or 'Walk'), the team creates 5 ad variants in under 30 minutes for Instagram Stories.</i>

Key Strengths:

- Dual aesthetic: anime-stylized AND cinematic realism in one tool
- Library of viral motion templates (one-click animation)
- Portrait animation: bring still images to life naturally
- V2.4.1 Advanced model with enhanced precision and consistency
- Easiest pipeline for image-to-animated-video conversion

6. Google Veo 3.1

Company	Google DeepMind
Animation Style	Cinematic 1080p, realistic physics, native audio (dialogue, SFX, ambient)
Pricing	Included in Google AI Ultra plan (~\$249.99/mo) Third-party via ImagineArt from \$9.99/mo
Best For	Premium brand ads requiring cinematic quality and synchronized audio
Use Case	<i>A luxury car brand uses Veo 3.1 to generate a 8-second cinematic ad where an animated sports car drives through a stylized neon city. The model generates the synchronized engine roar, tire screech, and ambient city noise in the same pass as the visuals — no post-production audio editing needed. The final ad runs on YouTube pre-roll and achieves a 12% click-through rate.</i>

Key Strengths:

- Native synchronized audio generation (dialogue + SFX + ambience)
- 1080p cinematic output with state-of-the-art physics
- Strong text adherence and scene composition control
- Accessible at lower cost through third-party platforms like ImagineArt
- Best-in-class for ads requiring audio-visual synchronization

7. Creatify

Company	Creatify AI
Animation Style	UGC-style, avatar animation, product animation, B-roll, animated demos
Pricing	Free (10 credits/mo) Starter: \$19/mo Pro: \$49/mo Enterprise: custom
Best For	E-commerce brands needing fast UGC-style or animated product video ads at scale
Use Case	<i>A DTC skincare brand inputs their product URL into Creatify. Within 60 seconds, the platform generates 8 ad variants — including animated product B-roll showing ingredient graphics flying in cut-out style, UGC avatar presenters, and voiceovers in 5 languages. The best-performing variant (animated flat-design style) achieves 3x ROAS on Meta. All ads are exported directly to Meta Ads Manager.</i>

Key Strengths:

- Product URL → video ad in under 60 seconds
- 1,500+ AI avatars with gestures and multilingual voice
- Product Video engine: still image → animated B-roll
- Batch mode for multi-SKU ad creation
- AdMax suite for competitor trend discovery and A/B testing

8. HeyGen

Company	HeyGen
Animation Style	Talking avatar animation, spokesperson style, multilingual lip-sync
Pricing	Free (3 videos/mo) Creator: \$29/mo Team: \$39/seat/mo Enterprise: custom
Best For	Spokesperson-style animated video ads, multilingual ad localization
Use Case	<i>A SaaS company uses HeyGen to create animated spokesperson video ads featuring a custom AI avatar that looks like their CEO. The same 30-second ad script is rendered in 12 languages with accurate lip-sync using</i>

HeyGen's translation feature — 175+ languages supported. This enables hyper-localized animated ad campaigns across Europe and Asia without re-filming or hiring local talent.

Key Strengths:

- 175+ language translation with native lip-sync
- Custom avatar creation from photos or short clips
- Text-to-video, image-to-video, audio-to-video pipelines
- 1,000+ stock avatars + custom avatar studio
- Team collaboration with 4K export on Team plan

How to Choose the Right Model

For Cut-Out & Paper Animation Style

Runway Gen-4.5 is the top choice. Its video-to-video restyling pipeline can convert any footage or illustration into a cut-out graphic style. Pair with Motion Brush to animate specific elements independently. Kling AI also supports stylized animation natively via its illustration and game CG modes.

For Anime & Illustrated Style Ads

Hailuo AI 2.3 offers the best price-to-quality ratio for anime and illustration styles, frequently benchmarked as equivalent to Veo 2 for stylized content. DomoAI is the easiest pipeline for converting a single static image into anime-style motion. Kling AI O1 provides the most control with Motion Brush and start/end frame specification.

For Scalable Ad Production (E-commerce & Performance Marketing)

Creatify is purpose-built for this use case. Paste a product URL and receive multiple animated ad variants optimized for Meta, TikTok, and YouTube within seconds. HeyGen complements this for multilingual campaigns requiring spokesperson-style avatar animation with accurate lip-sync in 175+ languages.

For Premium Brand Advertising

Google Veo 3.1 produces the highest cinematic quality with native synchronized audio — ideal for YouTube pre-roll and CTV campaigns. Runway Gen-4.5 is the alternative for brands needing more visual control and custom animation workflows. Both support 1080p+ output with professional motion physics.

Budget Guidance

Entry-level (under \$15/mo): Hailuo AI (\$14.99) or Kling Standard (\$6.99) — both produce strong stylized animation at minimal cost.

Mid-tier (\$15–\$50/mo): Runway Standard (\$12), Pika Pro (\$28), HeyGen Creator (\$29) — best balance of quality and features.

Professional / Team (\$50+/mo): Creatify Pro (\$49), Kling Pro (\$35), Runway Pro (\$28) — high-volume production with advanced controls.

Report compiled August 2025 | Prices subject to change — verify current pricing on each platform's official website.