

## Cover Letter

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# **Generative AI in Marketing: A New Era of Innovation and Opportunity**

## **Abstract**

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has been transforming the landscape of marketing, driving greater effectiveness in the areas of customer experience through hyper-personalization, growth through right analytics and automation, and productivity. This study explores the transformative potential of GenAI in revolutionizing marketing strategies and practices. The research presents a comprehensive review and analysis of the evolution of marketing technologies in the context of AI advancements, revealing a three-stage trajectory from a human-centric pre-AI era, through a data-driven post-AI era, to the dynamic and creative post-GPT era. It further identifies key gaps in current marketing practices and research, particularly around GenAI's impacts across various marketing strategies and behaviors, highlighting the need for mindful adoption of GenAI in marketing practice and development of marketing research on GenAI. GenAI tools present promising opportunities for enhancing consumer engagement, personalizing shopping experiences, automating marketing analytics, and dynamic content creation, their utilization must be ethical, informed, and considerate of demographic-specific implications. This research, therefore, provides valuable insights for future investigations aimed at understanding GenAI's role in the future of marketing, whilst guiding practitioners towards effective and responsible GenAI integration in their marketing strategies.

## **Introduction**

Generative AI (GenAI) has been disrupting marketing and sales in every sector since its implementation (Van Dis et al. 2023). GenAI surpasses traditional AI technology, characterized by its hyper-personalization, dynamic content creation, and automation capacity to revolutionized marketing practices. McKinsey conducted a survey to find that 90 percent of commercial leaders expect to utilize GenAI solutions “often” over the next two years (Deveau, Griffin, and Reis 2023). BCG also reported an initial observation of 30% productivity gain given GenAI’s low cost and ease of use (Ratajczak et al. 2023). CMOs are anticipating significant impact of GenAI in the area of lead identification (analytics), marketing optimization (AI-powered A/B testing, SEO strategies), personalized outreach (chatbots, virtual assistants), dynamic content (email, websites, marketing collateral), marketing analytics (real-time and dynamic audience targeting in up/cross-selling recs and continuous churn modeling), automated marketing workflows (product design, campaigns nurturing), etc. (Deveau, Griffin, and Reis 2023). GenAI has been integrated with various marketing tools offering transformative potential in marketing, underscoring the necessity for thorough examination, and understanding of its application and implications.

This paper's primary aim is to provide a comprehensive literature review on the adoption and implications of GenAI models like ChatGPT in the field of marketing in recent years. The paper is anchored by the following three research questions:

RQ1: How has the adoption of GenAI in the organization transformed the evolution and practices of marketing?

RQ2: What is the three-stage evolutionary trajectory of the marketing domain under the development of technology, and how have these shifts contributed to the current landscape and future potential of GenAI in marketing?

RQ3: What are the significant research gaps in the existing literature regarding the impacts of GenAI tools like ChatGPT on marketing, and how might these gaps guide future research?

The motivation of the research is rooted in the rapid advancements in GenAI, and its profound impacts on the evolution of marketing practices. The integration of GenAI and information and communication technology (ICT) in marketing has introduced a paradigm shift to a data-driven and GenAI-powered tools, leading to more personalized, automated, and effective marketing practices. However, despite significant research into the application of GenAI in marketing, there are still gaps in understanding, its impacts and risks across diverse demographics, which motivates this research, signaling the need for further investigation into GenAI in marketing.

This research contributes to the field by systematically reviewing the evolution of marketing due to ICT and AI advancements, especially GenAI. It delineates a three-stage trajectory of AI's influence on marketing, elucidating the transformative role of AI. Importantly, it identifies critical research gaps concerning AI's varied impacts across different demographics and related ethical issues, providing a valuable direction for future investigations. This study, therefore, enriches the current knowledge and shapes the future roadmap for GenAI's role in marketing.

## Methodology

This research primarily draws upon latest academic paper collected from the databases of . Supplementary resources were collected using Google Scholar to ensure comprehensive coverage of the subject. The search utilized keywords such as "ChatGPT", "GPT", "Generative AI" , “GenAI” in combination with "marketing" or "consumer behaviour". Given the novelty of GPT technologies and the relative recency of their emergence, the availability of ample literature specifically on GPT and marketing is limited. Consequently, we broadened the search criteria to include "AI" in combination with “marketing" or "consumer behaviour" to offer comparative analysis and supplementary theoretical support. In total, the literature search yielded a collection of 442 scholarly articles. The selected articles in Table 1 underwent through comprehensive review, forming the foundation for this study's analysis, discussion, and conclusions.

Table 1: Transformation on Marketing Practices				
Marketing Practice	Stage	Role of Technology (ICT or AI/GenAI)	Author(s)	Findings
Customer Experience	Pre-AI	<b>Database</b> played a role in providing the capability to collect, store, and analyze large volumes of customer data.	Cespedes and Smith, 1993	This was the first-time marketers began to systematically collect and analyze customer data. It highlighted that an integrated customer database can improve target marketing.
Marketing Analytics	Pre-AI	<b>Integrated CRM Platforms</b> powered by ICT enable constant, instant interaction with customers.	Parvatiyar and Sheth, 2001	E-CRM effectively helps to attract and retain customers, leading to customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Customer Experience and Marketing Analytics	Post-AI, Pre-GPT	<b>Data mining</b> discovers patterns in customer data and generates valuable insights.	Ngai et al.2009	The application of data mining techniques significantly enhances CRM efforts, including customer segmentation, by enabling a more precise and detailed understanding of customer behaviors and preferences.
Customer Experience	Post-GPT	<b>Conversational AI</b> provides an interactive interface to improve the customer experience and build stronger relationships with their clients through hyper-personalization, content creation, and automation	Atlas, 2023	Chatbots and conversation aids, bolstered by the technology of ChatGPT, have the potential to offer users a more dynamic and interactive experience compared to conventional communication methods like email or telephone.
Marketing Analytics	Pre-AI	<b>Social media</b> transforms traditional monologic marketing into a dynamic, participatory, and consumer-centered practice.	Kaplan and Haenlein , 2010	The opportunities social media offering businesses for marketing and communication is highlighted, but it also underlines the challenges, such as maintaining user privacy and managing user-generated content.
Marketing Analytics and Productivity	Post-AI, Pre-GPT	<b>AI-monitored social media</b> advances marketing by automating the process of analyzing massive amounts of data for insights on brand mentions, customer feedback, and trending topics, thus enabling more efficient and strategic marketing decisions in real-time.	Stieglitz et al.2018	The role of AI in effectively monitoring social media activities, providing valuable insights on brand mentions, customer feedback, and trending topics despite various challenges in data collection and preparation.
Customer Experience and Productivity (AI-Generated Social Media Contents and Marketing Campaigns)	Post-GPT	<b>GenAI</b> , like ChatGPT, advances marketing by automating the creation of persuasive, tailored content that resonates deeply with customers, thus driving heightened engagement, improved customer relationships, and increased conversion rates.	Taecharungroj, 2023	Leveraging ChatGPT can result in the creation of persuasive marketing content that strongly connects with customers, thereby driving enhanced engagement and increased conversion rates.

Marketing Analytics and Productivity	Pre-AI	<b>Algorithms of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM)</b> enhances the visibility of brands on search engines, attracting relevant traffic to websites through strategic keyword selection and bidding, thereby boosting brand awareness and increasing the potential for conversions.	Jansen and Mullen, 2008	The efficiency of sponsored search in drawing relevant traffic to websites, emphasizing the importance of keyword selection and bidding in search engine marketing
Customer Experience and Marketing Analytics	Post-AI, Pre-GPT	Machine learning and natural language processing advances <b>personalization and recommendation systems</b> by analyzing vast amounts of user data to discern patterns and predict preferences, thereby enhancing the user experience and guiding customers towards products and services that best fit their needs and wants, leading to increased customer satisfaction and sales.	Jannach, 2011	Recommendation can enhance the user experience, and how recommendation systems can guide customers to products that fit their preferences and needs is highlighted.
Customer Experience through hyper-personalization (personalized training content)	Post-GPT	<b>Conversational AI and anthropomorphic chatbots</b> such as ChatGPT offers personalized shopping experiences to effectively drive customer engagement, conversions, and loyalty.	Konya-Baumba ch et al. 2023	Anthropomorphic chatbots like ChatGPT significantly improve trust, intent to purchase, word of mouth, and shopping satisfaction. Their effectiveness varied with the shopping context, showing stronger effects in hedonic scenarios, while the revelation of sensitive data had no significant effect on their efficacy.
Marketing Analytics	Pre-AI	<b>Web analytics</b> advances marketing by integrating diverse data sources to provide valuable insights into customer behavior, enabling personalized marketing strategies and optimization of digital marketing efforts for better engagement and conversion rates.	Wedel and Kannan, 2016	Web analytics, especially when integrated with other data sources, can provide invaluable insights into customer behavior, personalization, and the optimization of digital marketing efforts.

Marketing Analytics	Post-AI, Pre-GPT	<b>Predictive analytics powered by data mining techniques</b> enables more strategic and data-driven marketing strategies that enhance customer targeting and business performance.	Shmueli et al. 2018	Predictive analytics, fueled by data mining techniques, can significantly improve decision-making processes in business and particularly in marketing strategy development.
Marketing Analytics	Post-GPT	<b>GenAI models</b> like GPT-3 provides easily comprehensible insights into complex societal megatrends and generating innovative solutions for global issues.	Haluza and Jungwirth, 2023	GenAI systems, such as GPT-3, can provide easily understandable insights into complex societal megatrends and generate solution ideas for various global issues, but an ethical discussion regarding their broader use for scientific research paper writing is highly overdue.
Customer Experience	Post-AI, Pre-GPT	<b>AI-powered chatbots</b> deliver interactive customer service in real time	Gnewuch et al. 2017	The potential of AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants in providing real-time, interactive customer service, enhancing customer satisfaction, and easing the workload of customer service teams.
Customer Experience	Post-GPT	<b>Generative AI-enhanced chatbots</b> provides accurate responses to customer inquiries and expedites problem resolution more efficiently than traditional customer support methods, leading to improved customer satisfaction and loyalty.	Mattas, 2023	Generative AI-enhanced chatbots can provide immediate answers to customer inquiries and can expedite problem resolution in a more efficient manner compared to traditional customer support methods.

The advancements of technology in the marketing domain revealed that the most important marketing practice in Pre-AI era is customer relationship management (CRM). In the earliest phase, database marketing (Cespedes and Smith 1993) signified a landmark shift as marketers began to leverage user data to enhance target marketing, marking the inception of data-centric strategies in marketing. As ICT advanced, Electronic Customer Relationship Management (E-CRM) system (Parvatiyar and Sheth 2001) rapidly rose to prominence,



deploying a platform-oriented approach, thus, facilitating real-time and personalized customer interactions across various channels. The advent of AI further boosted this transformation. Data mining, fortified by AI, enabled enhanced customer segmentation (Ngai, Xiu, and Chau 2009) by identifying patterns and deriving meaningful insights from a wealth of customer data, hence promoting personalized and targeted marketing strategies. In recent years, GenAI brought about a revolutionary shift by offering capabilities such as creating dynamic, personalized content and automation in marketing workflow, which led to an enriched customer experience and higher productivity (Atlas 2023). Social media marketing initially emerged alongside the rise of social media and quickly adapted to AI-Generated Social Media Contents and Marketing Campaigns, reflecting the flexibility and adaptability of modern marketing practices (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010; Stieglitz et al. 2018; Taecharungroj 2023). This allowed marketers to leverage AI to create tailored content, resulting in more effective and engaging campaigns. Additionally, GenAI introduced a similar disruptive shift in Personalized Digital Marketing (Jannach 2011; Jansen and Mullen 2008; Konya-Baumbach, Biller, and Von Janda 2023) and Marketing Insights (Haluza and Jungwirth 2023; Shmueli et al. 2018; Wedel and Kannan 2016), providing deeper and more accurate understanding of consumer behavior and preferences. Notably, Customer Service witnessed a significant transformation with the advent of AI. The rapid rise of chatbots and virtual assistance brought significant benefits, including improved response times and 24/7 customer support (Gnewuch, Morana, and Maedche 2017). With the advent of GenAI, this evolved further into a streamlined Customer Service model, offering more personalized and efficient customer experiences (Mattas 2023), as well as automated marketing workflow and dynamic creative content generation.

## **Discussion**

In the pre-AI era, marketing tools such as customer relationships management (CRM), Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM), Database Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Web Analytics, provide a more personalized consumer experience and effective marketing analytics . This paradigm underwent a seismic shift with the onset of the big data era. Marketing practices and research transformed into a more data-driven approach, leveraging the power of AI to mine extensive customer data (Yau, Saad, and Chong 2021). Sophisticated techniques, such as CRM and Customer Segmentation, Personalization and Recommendation Systems, Chatbots and Virtual Assistance, Predictive Analysis in Guiding Marketing Strategies, and Social Media Monitoring, were introduced. This era, powered by big data and AI, facilitated more precise customer profiling, thereby formulating personalized recommendations and targeted advertisements. It represented a strategic shift from traditional marketing, highlighting the transformative role of AI in the marketing domain.

The advent of GenAI, e.g. Generative Pretrained Transformers (GPT), marked the third stage in this evolution of marketing practices, ushering in the post-GPT era. GenAI's role expanded beyond data-driven strategy to encapsulate the generation of creative and original Marketing Campaigns and Marketing Insights, the enhancement of Customer Engagement and Customer Service, the creation of Personalized Shopping Experience based on personalized training content and real-time data from company and social platforms, and the automation of marketing workflow. GenAI technologies, with their advanced language modeling capabilities, heralded an era of diverse, creative, and human-centric marketing, effectively marrying the advantages of the previous two stages while adding an additional layer of dynamism and flexibility.

This three-stage evolution, from the human-driven pre-AI era through the data-driven post-AI era to the creative and diverse post-GPT era, signifies the tremendous transformative power of GenAI in marketing. The rapid and at times unpredictable technology advancements can also contribute to a non-linear evolution accordingly to Moore's law. GenAI's adaptability and resilience emphasized the continuous need for research on the GenAI innovation in shaping the future of marketing.

### ***Current Research Gap and Future Research***

As GenAI pervades in marketing, it provokes a rethink of the theoretical frameworks in a cross-disciplinary perspective. Advanced AI technologies are blurring the lines between human and machine, necessitating an evolution of HCI, Neuro marketing, and psychology theories that better incorporate these complexities (Adam, Wessel, and Benlian 2021). This shift has significant implications for understanding consumer behavior in the Post-GPT era, particularly concerning personalized marketing and consumer engagement strategies, creative content generation, and workflow automation.

Moreover, the advent of AI indeed opens up innovative perspectives and new data sources in marketing research. For example, multimodal data, an array of information incorporating various sensory modes and channels, is reshaping traditional data utilization methods in better understanding consumer sentiment, enhancing consumer profiling, product design and packaging, as well as designing effective marketing campaigns to improve customer experience. Facilitated by AI, these new data streams enable researchers to gather and analyze complex and contextually rich consumer information, thus offering deeper and more nuanced insights into consumer behavior (Bolton et al. 2018).

While current literature provides a plethora of insights on the application of GenAI in marketing, it also reveals conspicuous gaps in both research and practices. For instance, Paul et al. (2023) and Jain et al. (2023) highlight potential pitfalls related to consumer well-being, bias, misinformation, lack of context, privacy concerns, ethical considerations, and security issues raised by GenAI. However, research specifically scrutinizing the differential impacts of these challenges across diverse demographics remains strikingly limited. The literature, therefore, underscores a compelling need for comprehensive inquiries into how GenAI differentially influence varied demographic segments. The inequality in access and usage, skill gaps, privacy concerns, and regulatory challenges in marketing practices brought about by digital divide of GenAI at individual stakeholder, firm, industry, and region level should arouse the attention of marketing professional and researchers.

### **Conclusion**

AI's infusion into marketing research signals a tendency of cross-disciplinary collaboration with social sciences, especially sociology and psychology. This integration can foster a more holistic view of consumer behavior and marketing strategies, thereby enriching the overall contribution of the marketing discipline (Davenport et al. 2020). The integration of AI in marketing also introduces new ethical questions. Issues around data privacy, transparency, and the potential misuse of AI technologies require serious contemplation, contributing to the emerging discourse on ethics in AI-powered marketing (Martin 2016).

GenAI's potential to revolutionize marketing practices is contingent upon its judicious integration into marketing strategies. In this context, Paul et al. (2023) recommend that businesses leverage GenAI to bolster consumer engagement, elevate customer service levels,

deliver personalized shopping experiences, and facilitate social interaction and communication practice. Konya-Baumbach et al. (2023) validate the effectiveness of chatbot anthropomorphism in customer interactions, illustrating its significant positive effect on trust, purchase intention, word of mouth, and satisfaction with the shopping experience. Based on these findings, marketers are recommended to focus on ensuring transparency, trustworthiness, and respect for consumers' autonomy when integrating AI into their strategies (Puntoni et al. 2021). At the same time, using GenAI to create immersive discussions and strong involvement with consumers can enhance service outcomes (Balakrishnan and Dwivedi 2021). Moreover, in the realm of creativity, it is argued that a blended approach, encompassing both human and AI processes, may strike the ideal balance for innovative marketing strategies (Ameen et al. 2022).

The research contributes to the field in several ways. First, it provides a comprehensive review of the evolution of marketing in the context of ICT and AI advancements, highlighting the significant shifts in practices and the influence of technologies such as AI, especially GenAI. Second, it identifies a three-stage evolutionary trajectory of the marketing domain under the influence of AI, offering insights into the transformative role of AI in marketing. Third, it identifies crucial gaps in the existing literature related to the differential impacts of AI across various demographics and the associated ethical issues. This identification not only contributes to the current understanding but also guides future research in addressing these gaps. The study, thus, adds to the existing body of knowledge and provides a roadmap for future research in AI's role in marketing.

In conclusion, the integration of GenAI into marketing strategies can yield significant advantages, as demonstrated by the cases of GenAI. However, to fully harness these benefits, practitioners need to approach AI adoption mindfully, ensuring stringent data privacy and

security measures, and addressing ethical considerations. Therefore, while AI tools like ChatGPT present promising opportunities, their utilization must be informed, ethical, and considerate of demographic-specific implications. Future research should continue to explore these areas, contributing to a robust understanding of Gen AI 's role in the future of marketing.

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