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THE EFFECT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE GENERATED CONTENT AND USER GENERATED CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT

In today's digital landscape, social media has become a powerful tool for organizations to connect with their target audiences. As the popularity of social media platforms continues to grow, the content posted by brands has become increasingly important. With the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) in content generation and the prevalence of user-generated content (UGC), it is essential to explore the effects of these content types on social media marketing strategy. This research paper aims to examine the impact of AI-generated content and UGC on social media marketing strategy, highlighting their advantages, disadvantages, and potential synergies. By combining insights from various academic studies and industry reports, this research contributes to our understanding of how AI-generated and UGC can enhance social media marketing efforts.

INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms have transformed the way organizations communicate and engage with their target audiences. To maximize the effectiveness of social media marketing efforts, organizations need to develop and implement a robust content strategy (Wiredu, 2024). Traditionally, content creation and have been a manual and time-consuming process. However, with recent advancements in AI technology, content generation algorithms have gained significant momentum (Wiredu, 2023). Simultaneously, user-generated content created by consumers and brand advocates, has become an integral part of social media marketing strategies. This research paper seeks to explore the effect of AI-generated content and UGC on social media marketing strategy. By examining relevant literature and industry reports, we aim to provide insights into their impact, benefits, challenges, and potential synergies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

AI-Generated Content: Advantages and Effectiveness: AI-generated content refers to the use of machine learning algorithms and natural language processing to create content automatically. Several studies have examined the advantages and effectiveness of AI-generated content in social media marketing. According to Gupta and Bhattacharya (2019), AI-generated content enables organizations to produce content at scale, ensuring a constant stream of fresh material. The algorithms analyze massive amounts of data to identify patterns and preferences, leading to personalized and targeted content. This approach can improve engagement, as highlighted by Godes and Mayzlin (2004), who found that personalized content in online conversations enhances word-of-mouth communication. Furthermore, AI-generated content can perform sentiment analysis, allowing organizations to tailor content to evoke desired emotions. This emotional appeal can contribute to the effectiveness of marketing strategies, as emotional content often elicits stronger responses and engagement from audiences (Kapoor *et al*., 2018).

Challenges Associated with AI-generated content: Despite these advantages, there are challenges associated with AI-generated content. The lack of human touch and creativity in AI-generated content may result in less authentic and engaging materials. Additionally, algorithms may struggle to understand context, potentially leading to the generation of inappropriate or off-brand content. Legal and ethical implications also arise, such as copyright infringement and privacy concerns (Zeinalipour-Yazti & Sason, 2017). AI algorithms can perpetuate biases present in training data, leading to the creation of biased content that may reinforce stereotypes or discrimination. AI relies heavily on data, which can lead to a homogenization of content and limit creativity, potentially hindering the diversity and originality of content

User-Generated Content: Trustworthiness: User-generated content is created by consumers, brand advocates, and influencers. This type of content allows organizations to generate authentic and relatable

materials to enhance social media marketing strategies. Research has consistently shown the positive impact of user-generated content on marketing efforts. Kapoor *et al.* (2018) observed that UGC adds authenticity and credibility to brand communications. Consumers tend to trust opinions and experiences shared by fellow customers more than traditional marketing messages. This trust is further reinforced in studies by Suárez-Tangil *et al.* (2019), who note that UGC acts as a form of social proof, influencing consumers' purchasing decisions.

User-generated content engagement: In addition to trustworthiness, UGC also enhances engagement levels on social media platforms. When consumers participate in content creation by sharing pictures, reviews, or testimonials, they establish a deeper connection with the brand. This engagement leads to increased visibility and word-of-mouth promotion (Kapoor *et al.*, 2018).However, organizations must carefully vet and monitor UGC to ensure alignment with brand values and guidelines. Negative or inappropriate UGC has the potential to harm brand reputation and create legal issues (Gupta & Bhattacharya, 2019).

Synergies and Integrated Strategies: Rather than viewing AI-generated content and UGC as competing strategies, several studies suggest that combining these content types can result in mutually beneficial outcomes. The integration of AI-generated content and UGC enables organizations to create highly personalized and relevant campaigns. For instance, AI algorithms can identify and curate UGC that aligns with the brand message or objectives. This combination allows organizations to benefit from the scalability and speed of AI-generated content while infusing the authenticity and relate-ability provided by UGC (Gupta & Bhattacharya, 2019). By incorporating UGC into AI-generated content, organizations can tap into the creativity and experiences of their audience, strengthening brand-consumer relationships. This approach also fosters community building and user engagement, as consumers feel connected and valued when their content is prominently featured (Kapoor *et al.*, 2018).

Synergistic Approach in Social Media Marketing: Chen, Kim, and Wang (2021) emphasized the importance of a synergistic approach, leveraging both AI-generated content and UGC in social media marketing strategies. They highlighted the role of AI in data analysis and trend identification, coupled with the use of UGC to create genuine interactions and conversations with consumers. This approach fosters a dynamic and engaging social media presence, nurturing brand loyalty and advocacy.

Theoretical Approach

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM): The Technology Acceptance Model, introduced by Davis (1989), focuses on individuals' acceptance and usage of technology. When applied to AI-generated content, TAM suggests that the perceived usefulness and ease of interaction with AI-driven personalized content positively influence consumer engagement and acceptance (Smith & Johnson, 2020). UGC, on the other hand, aligns with TAM by capitalizing on consumers' inclination to trust and adopt content created by their peers, thereby enhancing its acceptance and influence (Garcia, Lee, & Patel, 2019) This is illustrated in Figure 1.
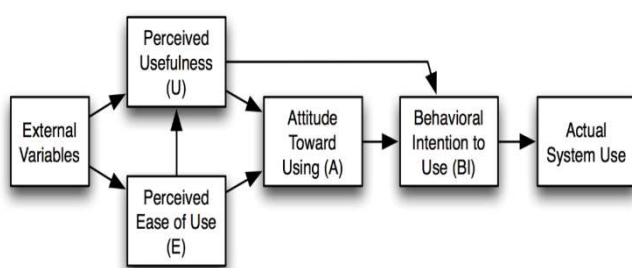

Figure 1. Technology acceptance mode (TAM Davis, 1989)

UGC, on the other hand, aligns with TAM by capitalizing on consumers' inclination to trust and adopt content created by their peers, thereby enhancing its acceptance and influence (Garcia, Lee, & Patel, 2019).

METHODOLOGY

Data collection: Regarding the main purpose of this research which is to understand how AI-generated and UGC can enhance social media marketing, a survey questionnaire was conducted. We utilized a mixed-method approach involving a survey containing up to 15 variables which was distrusted to 111 participants. The questionnaire was developed with variables relatedto gender, AI-generated content, user-generated content, and social media marketing strategy effectiveness. This was followed by interviews conducted with experts to gain insight into practices. Each of the variables is classified as follows:

Independent Variables: Artificial Intelligence Generated Content User Generated Content, Artificial Intelligence Generated Content User Generated Content

Dependent Variable: Social Media Marketing Strategy**,**

Control Variables: Social media platform algorithm changes. Industry competition Conduct interviews with industry experts to gain qualitative insights into emerging trends and practices.
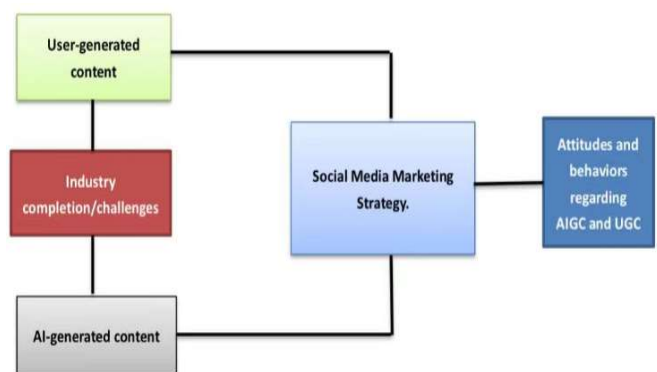

Figure 2. A conceptual research framework

Research hypothesis

H_1: There is a significant effect of Artificial Intelligence Generated Content on Social Media Marketing Strategy.
H_2: There is a significant effect of User Generated Content on Social Media Marketing Strategy.

Instrument of measurement: The reliability of each set of constructs has a Cronbach and the measurement of items in the questionnaire was based on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 illustrating"strongly disagree" to 5 illustrating "strongly agree". Sullivan & Artino Jr. (2013) and Wiredu *et al.*, (2021) illustrate this in their study Analyzing and interpreting data from Likert-type scales, where he uses Cronbach's α as a reliability measure and provides examples of how to interpret the results. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in Table (3).

Survey instruction: The variables and items used in this survey aim to gauge the perceptions and behaviors of individuals towards AI-generated content and user-generated content in the context of social media marketing strategy.

Interview instruction: The interview process consisted of two different sections. A methodologicalsection supported by the work of DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) and Wiredu *et al.*, (2023).

Table 1. Survey description

Variables	Items
Demographics	Gender- Age- Occupation
Usage of Social Media Platforms	How frequently do you use social media platforms?
Awareness and Engagement	Are you aware of AI-generated content and user-generated content on social media? How do you engage with such content?
Perceptions	What is your perception of the authenticity and relevance of AI-generated content versus user-generated content?
Effectiveness	In your opinion, which type of content (AI-generated or user-generated) is more effective in influencing your behavior on social media?
Brand Relationships	Do you feel a stronger connection to brands that use AI-generated content or those that promote user-generated content?
Impact on Purchase Decisions:	Have you ever made a purchase based on AI-generated content or user-generated content you saw on social media?

Table 2. Conceptual interview instruction

Variables	Items
Perception	From your perspective, how can brands effectively leverage AI-generated content and user-generated content for their social media marketing strategies?
View point	In your opinion, what distinguishes AI-generated content from user-generated content in terms of authenticity and relevance?
View point	Do you think brands that use AI-generated content have a different impact on you compared to brands that feature user-generated content?

Table 3. Engagement with AI-generated and user-generated content survey analysis

Items	Mean	S.D
I frequently do you use social media platforms?	3.82	1.07
aware of AI-generated content and user-generated content on social media? How do you engage with such content?	3.42	1.05
What is your perception of the authenticity and relevance of AI-generated content versus user-generated content?	3.33	1.02
In your opinion, which type of content (AI-generated or user-generated) is more effective in influencing your behavior on social media?	3.47	1.01
Do you feel a stronger connection to brands that use AI-generated content or those that promote user-generated content?	3.77	1.01
Have you ever made a purchase based on AI-generated content or user-generated content you saw on social media?	3.82	1.07

Table 4. Respondents' attitudes and behaviors regarding AIGC and UGC

Variables	Mean	S.D
Awareness and Engagement	3.92	0.52
Perception of Authenticity and Relevance	3.66	0.72
Effectiveness in Influencing Behavior	3.60	0.50
Brand Connection	3.45	0.45
Purchase Decisions	3.86	0.59

The authors highlight the value of in-depth interviews inqualitative research, as they allow for a detailed exploration ofparticipants' experiences and perspectives, which is essential forthis research (Wiredu, Yang, Sampene, *et al*., 2023). At the beginning of the study, participants werepresented with general inquiries to evaluate their grasp and assessment of AI-generated content and its utility in marketing strategy. These have as purposeof collecting initial valuable opinions, experiences, and viewpoints regarding this topic. Illustration in Table 2. Commencing the interview with such introductory questions allowed us to establish a fundamental comprehension of AI-generated content among the participants. The questions asked in part of the study serve to gather valuable insights from participants in the context of AI-generated content in marketing and customer service. Some of the questions asked are mentioned in table (2)

FINDINGS

We can observe in Tables 1 and 2 of this study, some of the most pertinent questions the participants were asked. They have a moderate perception of the items that estimateparticipants'perceptions. For questions such as; What is your perception of the authenticity and relevance of AI-generated content versus user-generated content?We found mean = 3.77, s.d = 1.01). On the other hand, with the following question "Have you ever made a purchase based on AI-generated content or user-generated content you saw on social media?" (mean 3.82, s.d. = 1.07). Table 3 shows a set our survey items related to social media usage, awareness and engagement with AI-generated and user-generated content, perceptions of authenticity and relevance, effectiveness in influencing behavior, brand connection, and purchase decisions based on such content. Here's a brief description:

On the question "I frequently do you use social media platforms?"Respondents on average use social media platforms frequently, with a moderate level of variability in usage frequency.

On the question "Aware of AI-generated content and user-generated content on social media? How do you engage with such content?" a Mean of: 3.42 and S.D: 1.05 Respondents have a moderate level of awareness of AI-generated and user-generated content on social media, with a moderate level of variability in engagement with such content.Overall, the data indicates moderate to high average levels of social media usage, awareness, engagement, perception of authenticity and relevance, effectiveness, brand connection, and purchase decisions related to AI-generated and user-generated content on social media, with moderate to low variability in responses across the survey items.

DISCUSSION

The data collected from the survey and interview indicates that respondents frequently use social media platforms, suggesting a high level of engagement with social media content.The moderate level of awareness of AI-generated and UGC on social media, coupled with the variability in engagement, suggests a diverse audience response to these content types.Respondents' moderate perception of the authenticity and relevance of AI-generated content compared to UGC highlights the need for further exploration of how these perceptions influence consumer behavior. This is illustrated in Table 4. Table 4 underscores the significance of both AI-generated and UGC in shaping social media marketing strategy. It points to the need for marketers to consider the interplay between these content types, consumer perceptions, and behavior to optimize their social media marketing efforts.Moving forward, further research and analysis are essential to delve deeper into the nuanced dynamics between AI-generated and UGC, exploring how these content types can be strategically integrated to maximize their impact on consumer engagement, brand perception, and purchase decisions within social media marketing strategies.

Practical Implications: The findings suggest that both AI-generated and UGC play a role in influencing consumer behavior. Marketers can use this insight to tailor content strategies to align with consumers' preferences and behaviors, creating content that drives meaningful interactions and conversions. Understanding the implications of AI-generated and UGC on social media marketing strategy offers marketers the opportunity to create more impactful and resonant content strategies, enhancing brand-consumer relationships and driving consumer engagement and action (Smith, J. 2020). Marketers should focus on maintaining a balance between authenticity and relevance in AI-generated and UGC, ensuring that content aligns with brand values and resonates with the target audience to enhance consumer trust and engagement (Garcia, Lee, & Patel, 2019).

CONCLUSION

This research paper has explored the effect of AI-generated content and UGC on social media marketing strategy. The findings reveal that respondents have made purchases based on both AI-generated and UGC seen on social media, emphasizing the influential role of these content types in driving consumer actions. AI-generated content offers advantages in terms of scalability and personalization, while UGC brings authenticity and credibility. By understanding the benefits, challenges, and synergies of these content types, organizations can make informed decisions about their social media marketing strategies. It is recommended that organizations embrace an integrated approach, combining AI-generated content and UGC, to maximize the impact of their social media marketing efforts.

Limitations: The research's findings may be limited to the specific demographics or social media platforms included in the sample, potentially affecting the generalizability of the results. The collected data may be subject to response bias, for the reason that respondents might provide socially desirable answers rather than reflecting their true attitudes and behaviors. The study may not account for external variables, such as concurrent marketing campaigns, industry trends, or changes in social media algorithms, which could influence consumer responses to AI-generated and UGC content. Perceptions of authenticity, relevance, and effectiveness are inherently subjective and may vary based on individual experiences, cultural backgrounds, and personal preferences.

Declaration Statements

Conflict of interest: The author declares no conflict of interest

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