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THE ENGAGEMENT RATES AND INFLUENCING FACTORS OF AI-GENERATED AND HUMAN-GENERATED SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT ON CONSUMER BUYING DECISION

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Abstract

In today's digital world, consumers are constantly exposed to content made by both human and AI on social but does it really matter who generated the content when it comes to influencing what consumer buy? This study examines that question by comparing how AI-generated and human-generated content affect consumer buying decision. AI tools are now widely used in marketing, so it's more vital than ever to know how consumers respond to them because many brands employ AI to boost engagement but still worried about trust, authenticity and brand image. The study utilized a qualitative method by using content analysis to analyse existing literature from 2010 to 2024 in which many studies are only related to artificial intelligence. Therefore, in order to fill the gap underexplored areas, this study investigate the factors influencing the consumer response and the engagement patterns of consumers towards AI vs. Human-generated social media content. The results suggest that AI-generated content do well and even look more trustworthy but consumer still prefer human-generated. This study gives marketers, companies and governments useful information on how to employ AI in a way that builds consumers' trust.

Keywords: AI-generated, Artificial Intelligence, Consumer Buying Decision, Human-generated, Social Media.

Introduction

In today's digital world, the line between human creativity and artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly indistinct which is changing the way people interact with brands on social media. This change isn't only about technology but it also changes how marketing messages are made, communicated, and understood by people (Tischendorf & Brinkmann, 2024). The rise of AI in social media marketing has led to what researchers call the "digital authenticity paradox." Consumers often face struggles to make a difference between content made by AI and content made by people, but being aware where the content came from can have a big effect on their buying decisions. Marketers must find a way to blend new ideas with being real in order to keep consumers' trust and engagement. This phenomenon has strong implications for businesses because 67% of consumers say that social media content affects their buying decisions (Macha et al., 2024), and companies who use AI in marketing get 50% more leads. The stakes are high because 58% of marketers invest more money into AI and automation in 2024 (Lukan, 2025), yet 60% are worried about potential harm to their brand reputation.

It becomes important for marketers to know how consumer react to content made by AI versus content made by human. Many studies show that AI-generated content can be used in advertisement without causing lower levels of consumer purchase intention and, in fact, AI-generated people are seen as more credible in advertisement than real human beings. The way people connect with AI versus human content shows some interesting things about how people think. Millennials between the ages of 25-34 are the most successful at spotting AI-generated content. US customers are also 10% more likely to notice AI content than UK consumers. These differences in demographics show that cultural and generational factors have a big impact on how people perceive and interact with different types of content. Also, just 33% of people trust generative AI, while 55% of people feel positive about companies who use AI in marketing which shows the complicated relationship between trust, acceptance and engagement.

Therefore, this research fills important gap by understanding how consumers response in the AI-generated and human-generated content on social media marketing. This study gives marketing professionals useful information on how to deal with the complicated digital world by looking at what makes consumers respond to AI-generated content versus human-generated content and examining their engagement patterns. The results contribute to the growing body of knowledge on consumer behaviour in the age of artificial intelligence and also give

businesses and policyholders useful guidance for improving their social media marketing campaigns while maintaining long term relationship with their consumers.

Literature Review

Beyari and Hashem (2025) showed how AI greatly increases the efficacy of social media marketing by facilitating real-time consumer interaction and personalized content delivery, which in turn improves purchase intentions among 893 MENA consumers. According to their research, artificial intelligence (AI) tools for influencer marketing, content optimization and customization successfully capture consumer attention while strengthening brand loyalty by improving user experiences. Extending these personalization capabilities, Zachurzok-Srebrny (2024) found that through in-depth behaviour analysis and predictive recommendations, AI-driven content personalization makes previously unachievable levels of customer engagement possible. The study demonstrated how AI facilitates real-time interactions through chatbots and evaluates social media sentiment to guide communication tactics, fostering stronger ties between brands and their target audiences. The impact of AI-driven strategies in sustainable social media marketing on consumer purchase behaviour was also examined by S P and Elantheraiyan (2025), who found that machine learning and natural language processing aid marketers in better understanding consumer preferences and streamlining the distribution of content. Studies of consumer perception about AI-generated entertainment show that their feelings are complex. Sepolen (2024) did experimental research with Generation Z consumers and found that most of them can tell the difference between AI-generated and human-made marketing content. However, knowing that AI generation doesn't change how much they trust products and companies. This study went against what most people thought about AI skepticism and showed that being open about how AI is used doesn't have a big effect on younger people's buying decisions. Tischendorf and Brinkmann (2024) also found that ads with AI-generated people and ads with real people did not make any differences, in fact, people thought that AI-generated content was more believable. Popa and Chenic (2025) shows that when ads use AI, people think the company is less authentic, which hurts their desire to buy, image of their business and consumer trust. These impacts are stronger for well-known brands than for fictitious one which shows that people react differently to brands they are familiar with and also those who know more about AI are less likely to trust brands. The engagement performance of AI-assisted content shows good outcomes Buffer (2024) looked nearly 1.2 million posts and found that AI-assisted content always gets more engagement on all social media platforms than the posts who don't use AI. Kumari and Gupta (2025) talked about how

AI may make online shopping more personal by using machine learning and natural language processing which makes product recommendations better and automates customer assistance, but there are still worries about authenticity and ethical biases. Ratta et al., (2024) said that AI-generated ads get people more interested in products and services and make more sales by making innovative, balanced ads that touch people's emotions. Wang (2025) created a deep learning system that accurately predicted what people will buy, showing how AI can change how people shop online and how to improve marketing. Lastly, Flores et al. (2025) found that AI-generated material has a big effect on how people use media since it changes based on what users like, which makes it easier for people to find and enjoy information.

Research Methodology

This study is based on qualitative research methodology using the content analysis. this research fills important gap by systemically investigate the factors influencing the consumer response and the engagement patterns of consumers towards AI vs. Human-generated social media content. The researcher use content analysis is particularly well-suited for this study because it allows in-depth examination of data within existing literature. The data is collected from peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2010-2024 with focus on the most recent publications to grasp the rapidly evolving buying decision of consumers.

Findings and Conclusion

The Engagement Pattern and Factors Influencing the Consumer Buying Decision Towards AI And Human-Generated Social Media Content

The study examines the factors which influence consumer response towards AI-generated and human-generated social media content. The "authenticity paradox" in AI-generated content is one of the most fascinating findings in recent studies. Despite consumers' constant preferences for real, human-generated content, research shows that they frequently lack the ability to judge the difference between artificial intelligence and human-generated content. According to Tischendorf and Brinkmann (2024), there was a statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) increase in the perceived credibility of AI-generated humans in advertisements compared to real humans which contradicts the commonly accepted belief that consumers find human content to be more reliable by nature. Similarly other study showed that half of consumers can accurately recognize AI-generated copy, and the MIT study found that when participants didn't know where the content came from, they were more satisfied with AI-generated content than with

human-generated content which implies consumer bias against AI may be more psychological than based on actual content quality perception.

Platform-Specific Performance Variations

There are notable differences in engagement metrics between various social media platforms. By analysing 1.2 million post it was found that AI-assisted content had higher median engagement rates across all platforms. The most notable differences were seen on Threads (11.11% vs. 5.56%) and TikTok (6.14% vs. 4.17%). On professional sites like LinkedIn, the advantage was minimal (6.85% vs. 6.22%), indicating that audience expectations and context play crucial roles in content reception.

Table 1: Factors Influencing Consumer Response to AI And Human-Generated Social Media Content

Factor Category	**Specific Factor**	**AI-Generated Content Impact**	**Human-Generated Content Impact**
Content Authenticity	Perceived Authenticity	Negative (-)	Positive (+)
	Transparency/Disclosure	Mixed (±)	Higher trust with disclosure
	Brand Genuineness	Negative (-)	Positive (+)
Brand Trust	Trust in Brand	Negative (-)	Positive (+)
	Credibility Perception	Positive (+)	Mixed (±)
	Brand Reputation	Negative (-)	Positive (+)
Content Quality	Content Creativity	Positive (+)	Mixed (±)
	Visual Appeal	Positive (+)	Mixed (±)
	Personalization	Positive (+)	Lower efficiency
Consumer Demographics	Age Group	Neutral (0)	Varies by age
	Technical Affinity	Neutral (0)	Less relevant
	AI Literacy	Mixed (±)	Traditional preference
Platform Characteristics	Platform Type	Platform-dependent	Consistent across platforms
	Content Format	Format-dependent	Versatile formats
	Social Proof	Lower than user-generated content	Higher with user-generated content

Source: Table is compiled from multiple research studies (2023-2025)

Engagement Pattern of Consumer

User-generated content (UGC), in particular, continues to have a major advantage when it comes to influencing consumer purchasing decisions. Studies consistently demonstrate that 90% of consumers say user-generated content (UGC) affects their purchasing decisions, with 74% saying that viewing UGC photos increase their propensity to buy which reflects Consumers' desire for authentic peer experiences and social proof. According to a Taylor study, 63% of consumers think UGC makes for a more genuine shopping experience, and 81% of consumers are willing to pay more and wait longer for products that use UGC (Nagrani & Kumar, 2021) which implies that although AI can improve productivity and customization, it cannot completely replace the ability of genuine consumer experiences to promote trust. Depending on brand familiarity, the impact of AI-generated content varies greatly. Established brands are more affected by AI disclosure effects, indicating that they stand to lose more from AI association than do fictional or newer brands which has significant implications for transparency regulations and brand strategy. AI-assisted content's engagement performance shows encouraging outcomes. AI-assisted content consistently achieves higher median engagement rates across all social media platforms when compared to non-AI-assisted posts, according to Buffer (2024) analysis of 1.2 million posts.

However, this study shows how social media posts generated by both AI and human can effect consumer buying decision. It reveals that individuals often prefer content which is generated by humans but they can't always discern the difference. Some AI-generated content is surprisingly perceived as more credible and interesting, especially when consumers don't know it was developed by AI. The research also indicated that user-generated content (UGC), including reviews and images from genuine consumers is still the most important factor in shaping consumer buying decision because they consider it as more authentic and trustworthy. There are some limitations in this research because it mostly uses previous literature and secondary data, it does not reflect the current feelings of consumers or cultural differences in real time. It also doesn't have any first-hand information, like interviews or surveys that could help us understand the deeper insights into consumer emotions and preferences. Therefore, future research should investigate into these by getting firsthand feedback from consumers of all ages, countries and social media sites. They should also look into how disclosing the use of AI affects brand trust and how AI can be used in a more transparent and ethical way. This will help marketers strike the right balance between being efficient and authentic which will help them build trust with their audience over time.

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