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The Integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Marketing Decision-Making: Impacts on Strategic Innovation Management and Data Governance

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Abstract

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) is rapidly transforming marketing paradigms by automating content creation, optimizing customer segmentation, and enabling real-time decision-making. This paper explores the multidimensional impacts of GAI on strategic marketing processes, managerial responsibilities, and ethical data governance. Based on a structured survey involving 312 participants, the research employs quantitative methods including descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and multiple regression analysis to examine how trust, satisfaction, emotional engagement, and behavioral loyalty interact with AI-driven marketing practices. The results indicate a strong positive correlation between satisfaction and customer engagement, with emotional engagement emerging as the most predictive factor of sustained loyalty. Trust remains a critical foundation, but its influence is mediated by the perceived transparency and ethical framing of AI tools. Furthermore, the study reveals a shift in managerial roles toward hybrid profiles that combine technological fluency, strategic foresight, and ethical sensitivity. Respondents emphasize the need for algorithmic transparency, data protection, and the human oversight of automated systems. Key concerns include the opacity of recommendation engines, potential biases in data interpretation, and the over-reliance on predictive models. From a governance perspective, the research recommends establishing AI ethics committees, integrating multidisciplinary collaboration, and developing clear policies to balance innovation with responsibility. This paper argues that GAI should not be seen solely as a tool for efficiency but as a transformative force that requires a rethinking of organizational culture, training, and value creation. By embedding ethical safeguards and stakeholder-centric values, businesses can build a sustainable digital future anchored in trust, relevance, and long-term engagement.

Keywords: algorithmic governance, cognitive technologies, data ethics, innovation management, strategic transformation

1. Introduction

The rise of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) represents a critical milestone in the digital transformation of contemporary organizations, particularly in the field of marketing. Unlike traditional automation tools that merely streamline existing processes, GAI leverages advanced deep learning models to autonomously generate text, images, audio, and interactive content.

This capability disrupts established practices, reshaping not only operational workflows but also fundamental approaches to innovation, decision-making, and knowledge management.

GAI can be understood as part of the broader family of cognitive technologies; however, it introduces a distinctive shift in the marketing value chain. It enables highly personalized, large-scale content creation, real-time customer interactions, and tailored marketing campaigns. These opportunities promise significant operational improvements but also demand strategic reorganization and managerial adaptation. Prior research highlights that adopting GAI requires rethinking managerial roles, repositioning critical skills, and redefining the balance between human judgment and machine intelligence in decision processes. Data governance, a central pillar of any AI-driven architecture, must also evolve to address concerns about transparency, ethics, and digital sovereignty.

Despite growing attention among practitioners and scholars, empirical research on the managerial impacts of GAI in strategic marketing remains limited and fragmented. Specifically, the effects on decision-making, innovation management, and algorithmic governance within real organizational contexts have yet to be systematically examined. This study addresses this gap by exploring the following research question: **How does the integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence transform strategic innovation management and data governance in contemporary marketing organizations?**

To answer this question, a quantitative approach was adopted to investigate the uses, perceptions, and tensions surrounding GAI adoption in marketing functions, while analyzing the resulting transformations in organizational decision-making structures. Importantly, this study focuses on a unique context—family-owned SMEs in Tunisia, which provides original insights into how digital maturity and CRM integration intersect with GAI adoption in emerging markets.

Building on this objective, the next section reviews the relevant literature, positioning GAI as a form of algorithmic innovation, with implications for governance, decision-making, organizational adaptation, and cultural acceptance.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews the theoretical foundations relevant to understanding the integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) in strategic marketing. It explores GAI as a form of algorithmic innovation, its implications for data governance and accountability, its impact on decision-making structures, its role in enabling dynamic organizational capabilities, and the cultural factors influencing technology acceptance.

2.1 Generative AI as Algorithmic Innovation

Generative Artificial Intelligence represents a sophisticated form of algorithmic innovation that goes beyond process automation. Unlike traditional systems that execute predefined tasks, GAI interacts with human users to autonomously create novel content such as text, images, audio, and interactive experience, shift that reveals its role as an active participant in creative processes rather than just a tool (Grewal et al., 2024). Generative Artificial Intelligence compels marketers to fundamentally rethink their professional roles. Managers are now expected to develop hybrid skill sets that combine design thinking, data analytics, and strategic foresight, enabling them to orchestrate and critically evaluate AI-generated outputs. At the same time, organizations must cultivate a culture of continuous experimentation, feedback loops, and adaptive learning models to capture the full transformative potential of these systems (Grewal, Satornino, Davenport, Guha, et al., 2025).

The integration of GAI also transforms decision-making processes, enabling faster scenario generation, personalized content delivery, and exploratory innovation, yet always requires human oversight to align AI outputs with strategic objectives (Grewal et al., 2024).

Building on this innovative potential, it is crucial to examine how data governance and accountability frameworks shape the responsible use of GAI in marketing contexts.

2.2 Data Governance and Algorithmic Accountability

The effective deployment of GAI depends critically on robust data governance practices. These systems process large volumes of heterogeneous data, which raises concerns about data quality, accuracy, and provenance (Janssen et al., 2020). Moreover, the inherent opacity of generative models, often referred to as "black boxes," reinforces the need for transparency and explainability, particularly when automated decisions have substantial implications for customers and partners (Raji et al., 2020).

Organizations must therefore implement mechanisms for algorithmic accountability, such as internal audits, ethical oversight committees, and bias monitoring systems, to ensure that AI outputs align with organizational values and societal norms (KPMG, 2023; McKinsey & Company, 2024). Effective data governance not only mitigates risks but also strengthens stakeholder trust, thus supporting the sustainable adoption of AI technologies (Janssen et al., 2020).

With governance structures in place, the next challenge concerns how GAI reshapes decision-making processes within hybrid human–machine environments.

2.3 Decision-Making Transformation in Hybrid Environments

Generative AI is fundamentally transforming decision-making by enabling hybrid environments where human oversight and machine analysis coexist. This trend, often referred to as augmented decision-making, capitalizes on AI's capacity for rapid data processing and scenario exploration, while preserving human judgment for strategic oversight (Geng & Varshney, 2023). In marketing, managers are no longer sole deciders but curators of AI-generated recommendations, responsible for verifying their ethical alignment, relevance, and strategic coherence with organizational objectives. This shift necessitates cultivating agile managerial profiles capable of navigating complex technological landscapes without sacrificing human-centered values (Ren et al., 2023). Furthermore, recent research emphasizes that human–machine collaboration can enhance governance and accountability in decision-making processes, ensuring that AI integration remains aligned with societal and organizational norms (Van Rooy, D. 2024).

To fully capture these changes, it becomes essential to analyze GAI adoption through the lens of dynamic capabilities and organizational adaptation.

2.4 Dynamic Capabilities and Organizational Adaptation

The adoption of Generative AI (GAI) can be examined through the lens of dynamic capabilities, defined as an organization's ability to sense opportunities, mobilize resources, and continuously adapt to changing environments (Teece, 2007). This perspective highlights the need for organizations to develop specific organizational competencies to navigate complex technological contexts.

Recent studies indicate that integrating GAI strengthens these dynamic capabilities by enabling proactive market signal detection**,** real-time personalization of offerings, and rapid experimentation with new value propositions. For example, research on intelligent auditing shows that dynamic capabilities significantly influence GAI adoption, which in turn enhances

organizational adaptation mechanisms and audit performance (Zhang et al., 2025). Similarly, enterprise architecture has been identified as a critical dynamic capability for scalable GAI adoption, balancing innovation and governance in large organizations (Ettinger, 2025).

However, increased reliance on algorithmic systems introduces risks, including over-dependence on automation**,** misalignment with strategic objectives, and accountability ambiguities. Studies on organizational adaptation to GAI in cybersecurity emphasize the importance of developing dynamic capabilities, such **as** organizational reconfiguration, to address the challenges posed by AI integration (Huang & Rust, 2021).

Therefore, developing dynamic capabilities in GAI-enabled environments requires balancing technological advancement with human-centric competencies such as critical thinking and ethical reasoning. This includes implementing appropriate governance mechanisms to ensure responsible adoption aligned with organizational and societal values.

2.5 Organizational Culture and Technology Acceptance

Integrating GAI into marketing practices transcends technology and strategy requires cultural transformation. Successful adoption rests on cultivating environments that encourage experimentation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and trust in automated systems (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Vial, 2019). GAI's autonomous creative features can both inspire and unsettle marketing teams, particularly when traditional roles evolve. User acceptance of technology depends on perceived usefulness, compatibility with current workflows, and confidence in using AI systems effectively (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Thus, organizations should invest in training, foster ethical awareness, and nurture psychologically safe environments that support responsibility-driven innovation (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020). Managers and leaders play a critical role in championing algorithmic transparency, co-designed use cases, and shared governance structures to ensure that GAI deployment aligns with organizational values and objectives.

Taken together, these perspectives highlight that GAI adoption in marketing is as much a matter of organizational learning and culture as it is of technological sophistication and strategic alignment.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the managerial impacts of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) on strategic marketing decision-making and data governance. Building on the theoretical foundations presented in the literature review, this approach enables empirical validation of the relationships between relational marketing dimensions and customer engagement in GAI-enabled environments. The main objective is to assess the influence of trust, satisfaction, emotional engagement, and behavioral loyalty on overall customer engagement, providing insights into how AI integration reshapes managerial practices and customer interactions.

The target population comprised customers or users of services offered by organizations operating in the marketing domain under investigation. Participants were selected based on the following criteria:

- **Active Engagement**: only individuals who had used the organization's products or services at least once in the past six months were included.
- **Demographic Diversity**: participants were chosen to ensure variation in age, gender, occupation, and relationship tenure, capturing multiple perspectives on marketing interactions.

• **Accessibility And Willingness to Participate**: respondents had to be reachable through online or in-person channels and voluntarily agree to participate.

A convenience sampling strategy was employed due to practical constraints and the exploratory nature of the study. The final sample consisted of 312 participants, a size sufficient for robust statistical analyses, including exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression. Recruitment was conducted through a combination of online channels (company mailing lists and social media) and in-person distribution at customer touchpoints, including retail locations, service counters, and events. This multi-channel approach ensured broad representation and captured both frequent and occasional users, reflecting real-world variability in engagement and aligning with the study's objective of examining relational marketing dynamics in GAI-enabled contexts.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to operationalize the key relational dimensions. The questionnaire consisted of four sections:

• **Sociodemographic Information**: age, gender, occupation, frequency of purchase, and relationship tenure.

• **Evaluation Of Relational Dimensions**: trust, satisfaction, emotional engagement, and behavioral loyalty.

• **Perception Of Relational Marketing Practices**: quality of communication, personalization efforts, loyalty programs, and human–digital interactions.

• **Overall Engagement Level**: intention to repurchase, willingness to recommend, digital interactions, and participation in loyalty programs.

The questionnaire primarily employed a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"), to ensure standardized measurement. It was distributed both online and in-person, with clear instructions emphasizing confidentiality and anonymity in accordance with ethical research standards.

Data analysis combined descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequencies, were used to characterize participant profiles and responses. Bivariate analyses, such as Pearson correlations and mean comparisons, examined relationships among relational dimensions. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to validate the conceptual structure of the constructs, and multiple linear regression analysis assessed the predictive power of trust, satisfaction, and emotional engagement on overall customer engagement.

This methodology ensures a coherent connection between theoretical foundations and empirical investigation, providing credible and generalizable insights into the role of relational marketing practices in GAI-enabled marketing environments. The findings from this analysis are presented in the next section, highlighting respondent profiles, relational dimension correlations, and the results of factor and regression analyses.

4. Results

This section presents the empirical findings of the quantitative survey, structured around respondent profiles, descriptive analyses of relational dimensions, and the results of correlation analyses, exploratory factor analysis, and regression modeling.

4.1 Respondent Profile

The final sample comprised 312 participants with diverse sociodemographic backgrounds. Gender distribution was nearly balanced, with 52% identifying as female and 48% as male. A

majority of respondents (approximately 65%) reported being customers of the company for more than two years, indicating established relationships. In terms of usage patterns, 71% stated that they interact with the company's services at least once per month, highlighting a customer base characterized by frequent engagement, an important condition for studying relational marketing dynamics.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Relational Dimensions

Responses to Likert-scale items indicated overall positive evaluations across relational dimensions:

- **Trust**: M = 4.01, SD = 0.68
- **Satisfaction**: M = 3.92, SD = 0.73
- **Emotional Engagement**: M = 3.85, SD = 0.80
- **Behavioral Loyalty**: M = 3.68, SD = 0.85

Among specific relational practices, the personalization of communication and the responsiveness of customer service received the highest ratings, suggesting that these factors are key drivers of perceived relationship quality.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficients revealed significant and positive associations between relational dimensions and overall customer engagement. Notably:

- **Trust and Engagement**: $r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$
- **Satisfaction and Engagement**: $r = 0.66$, $p < 0.01$
- **Emotional Engagement and Behavioral Loyalty**: $r = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$

These results support the theoretical proposition that stronger relational marketing practices are linked to higher levels of customer engagement, repurchase intention, and willingness to recommend.

4.4 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

To validate the measurement model, an Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted. Sampling adequacy was confirmed (KMO = 0.83), and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating suitability for factor analysis.

Four principal factors emerged, corresponding to the theorized constructs of trust, satisfaction, emotional engagement, and behavioral loyalty**.** Together, these factors explained 68% of the total variance, thereby supporting the construct validity of the measurement model.

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

A multiple linear regression analysis was performed to assess the extent to which relational dimensions predict overall customer engagement. The model was statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.57$, $p < 0.001$), accounting for 57% of the variance in engagement.

The most influential predictors were:

- **Satisfaction**: $\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$
- **Emotional Engagement**: $\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$
- **Trust**: $\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.01$

These findings indicate that satisfaction plays the most decisive role in shaping customer engagement, closely followed by emotional engagement, while trust provides an essential, though more indirect, foundation for sustaining long-term loyalty behaviors.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that, while Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) reshapes marketing practices, relational dimensions: satisfaction, emotional engagement, and trust, remain central drivers of customer relationships. Satisfaction emerged as the strongest predictor of customer engagement, corroborating prior research that positions satisfaction as a cornerstone of loyalty and long-term customer retention (Davenport et al., 2020). This suggests that, even in AI-enabled contexts, customer experience quality and responsiveness remain critical for sustaining engagement.

Emotional engagement proved to be a decisive factor, underscoring the necessity of authenticity and empathy in interactions involving GAI. These findings are consistent with recent studies emphasizing that AI-driven personalization must go beyond efficiency to convey meaningful connections (Huang & Rust, 2021; de Ruyter et al., 2023). In this sense, GAI's ability to generate personalized content at scale can enhance emotional bonds, provided that human oversight ensures alignment with brand values.

Trust was shown to provide the foundational basis for engagement, albeit with a more indirect effect compared to satisfaction and emotional engagement. This aligns with research highlighting the importance of algorithmic transparency and explainability for building user confidence in AI-mediated processes (Ribeiro et al., 2016). Without trust, even the most advanced personalization and engagement strategies risk being undermined by customer skepticism or concerns over data use.

From a managerial perspective, these results point to the necessity of adopting hybrid strategies that integrate GAI's technical capabilities with human-centered governance. Managers must ensure that AI-driven personalization is transparent, ethically sound, and consistent with organizational values, echoing recent calls for responsible AI integration in marketing (Wilson et al., 2022; Rahwan, 2018). This study also confirms tensions noted in the literature, particularly risks of over-reliance on AI outputs and ambiguities in accountability between human and machine decision-making (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; Rahwan, 2018).

Theoretically, this research contributes to the literature by validating the applicability of relational marketing frameworks in AI-enhanced environments and by extending prior studies on human–machine collaboration. Practically, it provides marketing managers with actionable insights: satisfaction and emotional engagement remain the most critical levers for engagement, but trust must be carefully safeguarded through transparent communication, ethical oversight, and robust data governance mechanisms.

In sum, the results highlight that GAI integration should not be reduced to a technological upgrade. Instead, it represents a strategic opportunity to strengthen customer relationships, reinforce trust, and promote sustainable innovation, bridging the gap between technological disruption and human-centered marketing practices.

6. Managerial Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, several managerial implications can be drawn to support the responsible integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) into strategic decision-making and customer relationship management. The results highlight that customer satisfaction remains the most powerful predictor of engagement. Organizations should therefore prioritize

investments in customer experience by enhancing service quality, streamlining customer journeys, and ensuring responsive interactions—even when mediated by AI systems. Continuous monitoring of customer feedback is essential to refine AI-enabled services and sustain high satisfaction levels.

In addition to satisfaction, emotional engagement emerged as a decisive driver of loyalty. Marketing strategies should leverage GAI's personalization capabilities not merely to improve efficiency but to cultivate authentic and meaningful connections with customers. Campaigns must resonate on a human level, emphasize empathy, and reflect genuine brand values, thereby reinforcing long-term relational bonds.

Trust was also shown to play a foundational role in engagement, underscoring the importance of transparency and accountability in AI-driven interactions. Managers should clearly communicate how customer data is collected and used, ensure compliance with data protection regulations, and implement explainable AI practices that demystify automated decisions. Such measures strengthen customer confidence and safeguard brand integrity.

Furthermore, personalization efforts should be tailored to different customer segments to maximize impact. Differentiating strategies for new versus loyal customers, or frequent versus occasional users, ensures relevance and enhances the effectiveness of AI-enabled marketing. Finally, successful GAI integration requires developing internal capabilities that combine technical expertise with ethical sensitivity. Organizations should invest in training programs to equip marketing teams with the skills needed to responsibly manage AI tools, anticipate potential biases, and navigate the ethical dilemmas associated with automation. Cultivating a culture of ethical reflection and continuous learning will help organizations balance innovation with responsibility.

While these recommendations provide practical insights, it is equally important to acknowledge the study's limitations and identify avenues for future research.

7. Limitations and Future Research

Despite providing valuable insights into the integration of GAI in marketing decision-making and its impact on customer engagement, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of a convenience sample, although practical for exploratory research, may limit the generalizability of the findings. While the sample size was sufficient for robust statistical analyses, it may not fully capture the diversity of customer segments or industry contexts. Second, the cross-sectional design only captured perceptions at a single point in time, making it difficult to assess how attitudes, satisfaction, or loyalty evolve as organizations expand their use of GAI. A longitudinal approach would offer richer insights into the long-term dynamics of customer relationships in AI-enabled environments.

Third, the reliance on self-reported measures introduces potential biases, such as social desirability or recall inaccuracies. Although validated constructs and Likert scales mitigate some of these risks, complementing survey data with behavioral metrics (e.g., purchasing patterns or digital engagement records) could enhance validity. Finally, the study focused on a specific industry and organizational setting, which may limit the transferability of findings to other contexts. Comparative studies across sectors and cultural environments could test the robustness of the model and reveal contextual differences in the role of relational dimensions.

Future research should therefore adopt multi-method approaches that combine surveys, interviews, and behavioral data to triangulate findings. Cross-sectoral and cross-cultural comparisons would help identify best practices and highlight contextual factors influencing GAI adoption. Additionally, examining moderating variables such as organizational culture,

employee AI literacy, and customer digital readiness could deepen understanding of the conditions under which generative technologies can be ethically and effectively integrated into marketing practices.

Considering these limitations and opportunities for further inquiry, the conclusion summarizes the key findings and emphasizes their broader implications for marketing practice and theory.

8. Conclusion

This study offers new insights into the transformative role of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) in strategic marketing decision-making and data governance. Through a quantitative analysis of key relational marketing dimensions—trust, satisfaction, emotional engagement, and behavioral loyalty—it demonstrates how GAI integration affects customer engagement while highlighting critical managerial and ethical considerations.

The findings confirm that satisfaction and emotional engagement are the most powerful drivers of sustained customer loyalty, even in AI-enabled marketing environments. Trust

remains a foundational condition that enables these relational dimensions to flourish but requires deliberate efforts to ensure transparency, data protection, and ethical oversight.

These results underscore that adopting GAI is not merely a matter of technological efficiency but demands a strategic rethinking of customer relationships, organizational roles, and data governance practices.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the emergence of hybrid managerial profiles that blend technological fluency with ethical sensitivity and strategic vision. Managers must navigate the complex balance between leveraging AI's capabilities for personalization and maintaining authentic, value-driven customer relationships. Robust data governance frameworks, including internal audits and ethics committees, are essential to ensure algorithmic accountability and protect stakeholder trust.

By addressing these challenges, organizations can move beyond viewing GAI as a purely operational tool to embrace it as a catalyst for sustainable innovation and long-term value creation. This research contributes to the ongoing academic and managerial debate on AI integration by highlighting the need for participatory, transparent, and ethically informed approaches that align technological potential with human-centered strategic goals.

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