

## BOT OR HUMAN? A STUDY OF CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS AI-GENERATED ADVERTISEMENTS IN DIGITAL MARKETING

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### **Abstract:**

*With the increasing use of A.I. (AI) in marketing & advertising, understanding consumer trust towards AI-generated content has become crucial. This study aims to examine whether consumers find AI-generated advertisements as trustworthy & convincing as human-created advertisements. The research follows an experiment-based survey method, where participants are shown two similar advertisements without being informed which one is AI-generated & which one is human-made. Respondents are asked to rate the trustworthiness of both advertisements & indicate their likelihood of purchasing the product.*

*The study also includes a question to understand consumer perception if they are informed that the advertisement is completely AI-generated. Data is collected using a Google Form & analyzed to identify patterns in consumer trust & buying behavior. The findings of this research are expected to provide insights into how AI influences consumer decision-making & whether transparency about AI usage affects trust in marketing communication. We need to understand how AI is revolutionizing the marketing aspects of the organization, as, in one way or another, it is the marketing skills & patterns of the organization that influence customers to get involved with a particular product or organization.*

**Key words:** *A.I.(AI), consumer trust, AI- generated advertisements, marketing, communication, buying behavior, digital marketing, mass marketing.*

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### **Introduction:**

A.I. is really changing the way businesses work nowadays. When it comes to marketing, A.I. is being used more and more to create content, predict what customers will do, make things personal, group customers, and show them ads just right for them, helping companies send messages to a lot of people at the same time, and saving their time, money, and work. The use of A.I. tools like chatbots and systems that make content are becoming more popular. When we use AI to create things, it raises some important questions regarding authenticity and trustworthiness. We need to think about how it affects people and how we use it.

People trust brands that seem real and honest. That is why marketing works better when people believe in the brand. Old-style advertising uses feelings and stories to

connect with people. It is like talking to someone and making a friend. Now, machines are making some of the advertising. Marketing is about trust, and people need to trust the brand. The machines are getting better at making advertisements. Are they as good as people at making real connections?

This study is about looking at how people trust marketing that is made by artificial intelligence. It wants to see if people can tell the difference between ads made by intelligence & ads made by humans, & what happens when people are told that an ad was made by intelligence. Does it make them more or less likely to buy something?

### **Literature Review:**

**1. Puntoni et al. (2021) – “Consumers & Artificial Intelligence.”** People want to know when A.I. is being used on humans. It was found out that A.I.

does not always get trust from people. This is especially true when it comes to things that involve emotions or creativity, or when people have to make their judgments. Consumers like it better when humans are making the decisions for artificial intelligence. They feel at ease when humans are in charge of decision-making rather than machines, like artificial intelligence. People usually think that A.I. is good at doing logical tasks but not so good at emotional or creative work like advertising. That can affect the trust they have in a product, which in turn affects their buying decisions, about the product and the A.I. used to make it.

#### 2. Araujo et al. (2021) – “Machine Learning in Marketing Communication.”

This article is about how machine learning is changing the way companies do marketing communication. Machine learning is really good at helping companies send messages fast and it does not take a lot of time. The study also says that when people find out that machine learning is used to make these messages, they might feel a little weird about it. They might think that companies are trying to trick them. The research shows that being open and honest is really important. When companies tell people how they use A.I., it helps build trust and makes them seem honest. At the same time, A.I. can be less effective at convincing people to do something if companies are completely open about how they use Artificial Intelligence.

#### 3. Davenport et al. (2024) – “Ethical & Legal Challenges of AI in Marketing.”

This study is about the problems that come with using AI in marketing. A.I. can invade our privacy, or it can be unfair. Companies must use A.I. responsibly and make sure it is ethical for people.

#### 4. CEEOL Article – AI & Consumer Perception

This article is about how people think about intelligence when it comes to advertising

& branding. It says that A.I. makes marketing easier & faster. People often think that A.I. is missing something that a real person can give. A.I. is used to make things more efficient, but it is not always good at making people feel connected to a brand or product. The study shows that people are more likely to trust brands that use technology and human creativity together. Brands that balance technology with creativity are the ones that people trust more.

#### 5. Longoni et al. (2022) – “Resistance to Medical Artificial Intelligence.”

This study is about healthcare. It has some really good points that apply to marketing, too. People trust people more than they trust machines when it comes to things that are sensitive, like healthcare & marketing & that is what this study about healthcare is saying. The ideas in this study about healthcare are very relevant to marketing because people just trust people more than machines. Emotional trust is very important to people. They prefer to listen to what other people think rather than what a machine, like AI, says, even if the machine is usually right.

#### Relevance to this study:

Based on previous studies, it is found that A. I can make marketing better & more personal... Many consumers think that advertisements made by intelligence are not real and do not make them feel anything. When companies are honest and clear about using intelligence, it helps consumers trust them and want to buy things from them. So the thing is, when we look at what people have written about this, it seems like we need to find a way to make A.I. work with human creativity, not just take its place.

#### Research Methodology:

The study uses a descriptive research design, which aims at systematically describing consumer perceptions attitudes towards AI-generated marketing and understanding its influence on the marketing

sector.

The primary data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire designed and distributed through Google Forms. The questions included were asked with an aim to get quantitative & qualitative insights from the respondents. We had 80 people take part in our study. We chose people who use the internet

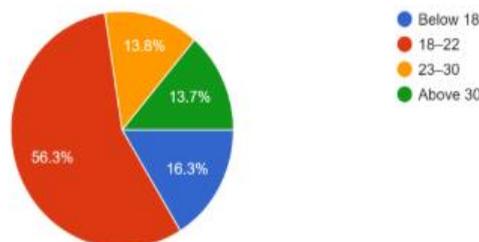
a lot and see ads all the time. We used a rating system to see how often they do things and what they think. The rating system had 4 points. It went from -Rarely (1), Sometimes (2), Often (3), Very Often (4), etc.

These tools were selected to provide clarity in understanding trends, patterns, and consumer attitudes toward AI-generated marketing

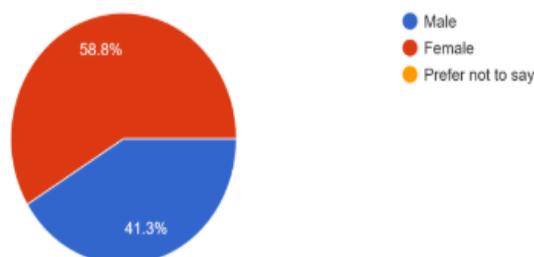
## Findings/Research

### Section 1: Basic Information

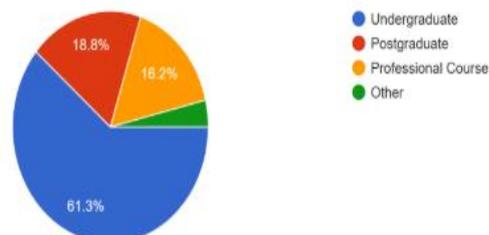
Age Group  
80 responses



Gender  
80 responses

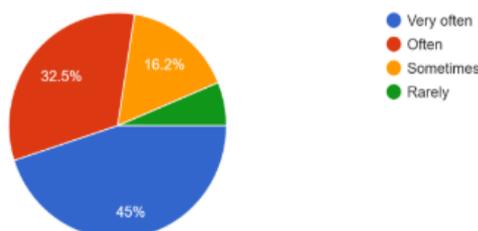


Educational Background  
80 responses



The people we were trying to reach were people who use the internet a lot. Most of the people who answered our questions were between 18 & 22 years old, which means they are part of the GEN Z group. This group is known for using AI and other similar things. Since we were looking at people who are 18 to 22 years old, most of the people who answered were undergraduate students. Some were students, and a few were working professionals, but the major focus demographic segment was the GEN z population.

How often do you see online advertisements?  
80 responses



How often do you see online advertisements?	very often	Often	Sometime	Rarely
<b>Weight assigned</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Responses received</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>

**Weight Average Mean: 3.16**

The score of 3.16 for advertisements shows that people usually see these ads a lot. This score is really close to the “Often” category. The study is really important because people see marketing all the time. They are always looking at this kind of thing so they can tell if an advertisement was made by a computer or not. Online marketing is a part of the media people use today, and this study of online marketing & AI-generated advertisements is very relevant to the current marketing scenario.

**Section 2: Advertisement Evaluation**

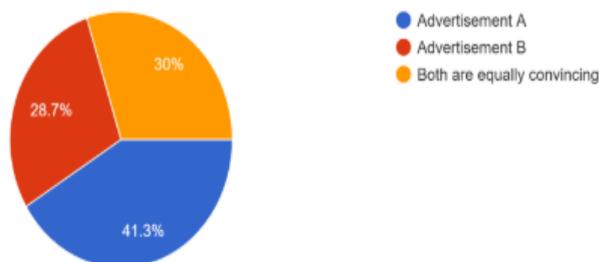
In this section, the respondents were provided an advertisement for a simple product – a steel water bottle, and two different advertisement scripts were given for them to analyze and guess which one of the two was AI-generated and which one was humanized.



Advertisement “A” was the human-generated one, and Advertisement “B” was the AI-generated one. Now, let’s analyze how the respondents processed the given advertisements and whether they were able to find out the difference and their views regarding the usage of AI in marketing.

**Question 1:**

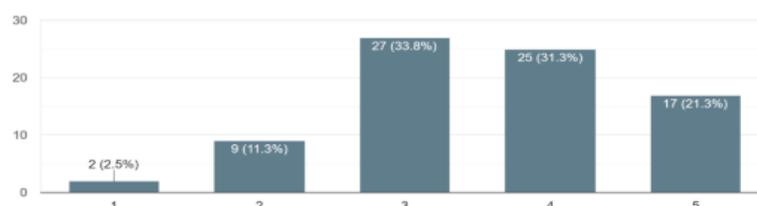
Which advertisement do you find more convincing?  
80 responses



The pie chart shows what people think about two advertisements which one they believe is more convincing. People liked Advertisement A more. It was chosen by 41.3 percent of the people who answered as the advertisement that convinced them the most. The advertisement really stood out to these people. A lot of people picked Advertisement B. To be exact, 28.7 percent of the people who answered chose Advertisement B. The results show that people, like the advertisement made by humans, prefer it more (41.3%). A lot of people (30%) think that both advertisements are just as good. This means that the advertisements made by A.I. are getting better at convincing people. The A.I. advertisements are really good now.

**Question 2:**

Rate the trustworthiness of Advertisement A  
80 responses

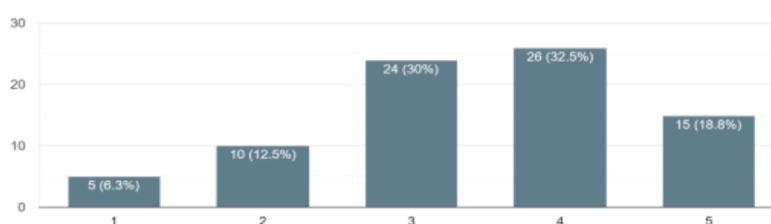


Rate the trustworthiness of Advertisement A	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Responses received</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>

People think Advertisement A is really good. Over 86 percent of the people who saw it think it is okay to trust it a lot. This shows that people still believe things that are made by humans when it comes to marketing. People are still preferring human-made advertisements due to various psychological and emotional factors as well.

**Question 3:-**

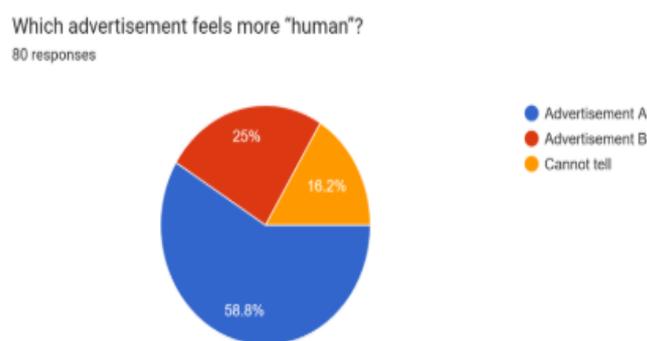
Rate the trustworthiness of Advertisement B  
80 responses



Rate the trustworthiness of Advertisement A	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Responses received</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>15</b>

People think Advertisement B is pretty good. They generally like it. Some people do not trust it at all. This shows that people are still skeptical about Advertisement B & other ads made by intelligence. That is why people are skeptical. They prefer ads made by humans because they think Advertisement and other machine-made ads are not trustworthy. The results show that even though advertisements made by A.I. can get people to trust them to an extent, advertisements made by humans are still more trustworthy because it seems real, it has a lot of feeling, and seems to be made with good values, which are things that people usually think are part of human creativity.

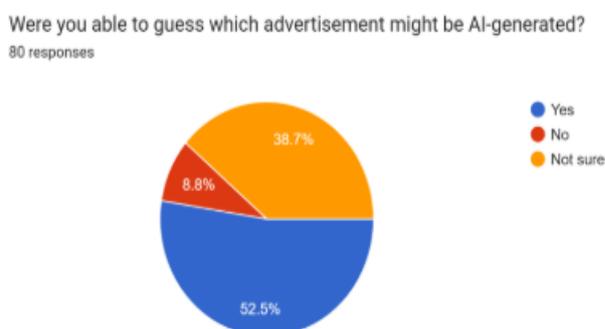
**Question 4:-**



The pie chart shows what people think about which advertisement, which seems like it was made by a real person. Most people, fifty-eight point eight percent, said that Advertisement A, which was made by humans, felt more like it was made by a human. A lot of people also think that the advertisement made by A.I. seems like it was made by a human, or they just cannot tell the difference between the two. This shows that A.I. generated marketing content is getting really good.

**Section 3: Perception of AI-generated Marketing**

**Question 1:-**

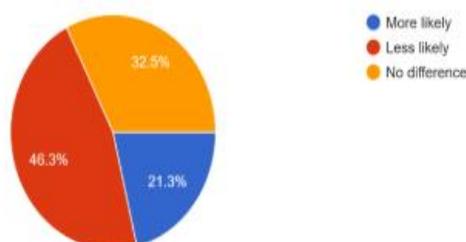


Most people think they can tell if an advertisement was made by a computer or a person. A lot of people are not really sure. This means that advertisements made by computers are getting harder to tell from advertisements made by people. This is why people have a time figuring out if an advertisement was made by a computer or a person.

**Question 2:-**

If you knew an advertisement was 100% AI-generated, would you be more or less likely to trust it?

80 responses

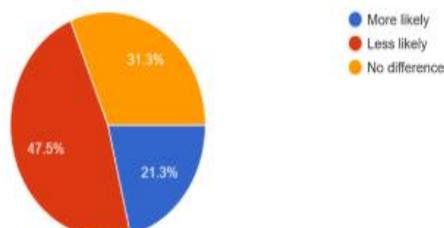


When we analyze this aspect of the influence of AI on the psychological buying decision of the buyers, we can understand that the trustworthiness of the advertisements changes with respect to the usage of AI. A major population stated that they are less likely to trust the seller. It has been observed through social media trends that many influencers buy products based on AI advertisements & 9/10 times they faced disappointment on receiving the products, which were nowhere near similar to the advertisements.

**Question 3:-**

Would you be more or less likely to buy a product if the advertisement was AI-generated?

80 responses

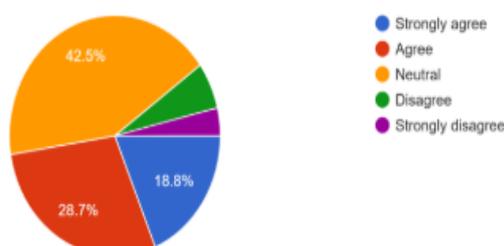


The results show that when people know that AI is involved, they start to hesitate. This means that even if advertisements made by A.I. are good, knowing that A.I. is replacing ideas can make people feel less sure and less confident about the product. A.I. marketing can be very convincing. The connection between people who do not trust something and their decision not to buy it shows how important it is to understand & consumer psychology when it comes to using AI in marketing. Showing that companies need to use AI in a way that's careful & easy to understand, & they should not remove the human element from the way they talk to customers about marketing.

**Question 4:-**

Do you think AI-generated advertisements lack emotional connection?

80 responses



Do you think AI- generated advertisements lack emotional connection?	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Weights</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Responses</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>

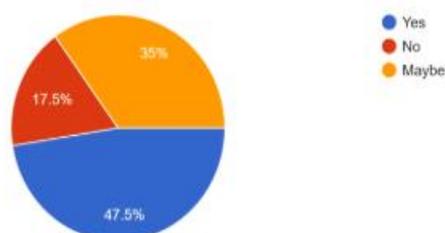
**WAM: 3.53**

It was found that advertisements that are made by A.I. lack an emotional connection. A.I. advertisements many times fail to engage the viewers in an emotional context. Many times, it is observed that the core focus of AI-generated advertisements is to just sell the product instead of developing a long-term customer bond.

**Section 3:- Opinion-based questions**

Question 1:-

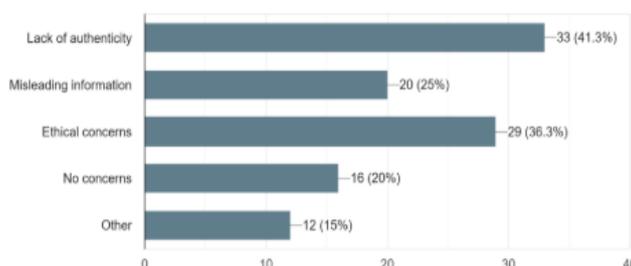
In your opinion, should companies disclose whether ads are AI-generated?  
80 responses



Even if being open & honest might not work well in the short term, it is still very important to consumers. If they are open about using intelligence, it might not work as well right away, but it can help people trust the company more over time.

Question 2:-

What concerns you the most about AI-generated advertisements?  
80 responses



People are really worried about one thing when it comes to ads made by Artificial Intelligence as consumers think A.I. marketing is not as sincere and does not make them feel as much as ads made by humans. They are scared that A.I. is not transparent. The problem of information is also a big issue. They do not think A.I. is reliable. They are skeptical about the content that A.I. generates. There is a group of consumers who are okay with AI in marketing. These consumers probably care more about how useful an advertisement is rather than how it makes them feel or if it is the right thing to do.

### Discussions & Conclusion:

The findings show that AI-generated marketing is really good at copying what people create. AI-generated marketing still has a hard time making people feel something. It is not very good at being real & authentic, which is what people really want from marketing.

When they find out that A.I. is involved, they start to doubt it. To date, consumers prefer advertisements that speak to them with an emotional aspect, which is observed to be missing in AI-generated ads. People have a time telling if an ad is made by a machine or not because AI is getting good at manipulating human work. People still want companies to be truthful and open with them. A.I. should help people be creative in marketing, not do the job for them. It is essential that A.I. and human creativity, in marketing communication, work together.

When ads say they were made by a computer, people are less likely to buy the product. This shows that people are not comfortable with the idea of computers being creative, even if the ads are just as good as the ones made by people.

So companies should use a mix of marketing methods that combine intelligence with human ideas. This way, the marketing strategy for companies can be efficient. If companies do this, they can get people to trust them. This can be good for the company in the long run, which is good for building trust with consumers and for the company's brand of the company.

### Limitations of the Study:

The study has several people in it, and most of them are young college students. This means the study might not be true for people belonging to other demographic segments. The study does not look at the A.I. tools or the situations in which they are used to sell things. This is important because some A.I. tools and situations may affect how much people trust them in ways. People should think about these limitations when they are

trying to understand what the results of the study really mean about intelligence tools.

### Future Scope of the Study:

To get a better idea of the impact of AI & its influence on buying strategy, it would be effective if such experimental research were conducted at a large scale, covering a huge demographic & not just a particular age group or user segment. Conducting such research would prove to be beneficial for the organizations & educational for the users & consumers.

It is important that we look into how companies use A.I. for marketing & see how much people are comfortable with using Artificial Intelligence. They can talk to people one-on-one or in groups to get an idea of how people really feel about A.I. if they think it is right or wrong.

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