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Constructing Consumer Trust through Artificial Intelligence Generated Content

Xi Jiang, Zhigang Wu, Fu Yu

School of Literature and Journalism, Chengdu Jincheng College, Chengdu, China

Abstract: *Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a digital technology is a substitute for all aspects of physical and cognitive human activities. It also impacts content marketing practice, such as the production and distribution of content. Artificial intelligence-generated content (AIGC) has shown potential in those marketing activities. However, recent studies have tended to focus on the consumers' confidence crisis on AIGC. Marketers further see Social Media Influencers (SMI) as instrumental in attempting to increase their consumer bases, and the frequency of engagement with content marketing. However, recent research on SMIs has focused on content marketing activities, rather than content generation. Hence, this study addresses a research gap related to AIGC and Consumer Trust(CT). It sets out to shed light on the impact of AIGC on consumers and examines the extent to which AIGC might be useful to win the trust of consumers. It also examines how marketers and brands can use AIGC appropriately in their SMIs marketing activities. This study applies a qualitative approach to identify 55 relevant publications on this topic, this study explores the use of AIGC in content marketing to win CT. Four themes are identified: Content Production, Content Distribution, Content Analysis and Content Engagement. The study also identifies a number of practical suggestions aimed at content marketing practitioners which highlight the benefits and drawbacks of AIGC.*

Keywords: *Consumer Trust; Artificial Intelligence; Content Marketing*

1. Introduction

AI involves several technologies comprising of natural language processing, computer vision, machine learning, neural networks, and physical robotic automation [1,2,3]. AI work processes involve networked computers learning from massive data sources to exhibit and interpret data. These computers emulate human communication and behaviour [2,4]. This process has made a remarkable impact on various industries, such as public relation [5], and there is no doubt that tremendous changes caused by AI have emerged in the field of marketing [2,6]. Chintalapati and Pandey (2022) predict that deploying AI in marketing operations will mainstream operations will have a greater impact on the future [7].

Vast volumes of news and information are created by social media (SM) every day. The rapid growth of multimedia content (e.g., text, audio, image, and video) on SM platforms has captured the attention of a number of academics [8]. Many organisations invest in online promotional activities in the AI era to keep up to speed with the rapidly evolving level of digital media consumption. Consumers are now more aware than ever that fake news spreading on social networks could be related to product promotional information spread by branded merchants. Internet users cannot easily differentiate false from authentic information [9].

Marketers are aware that consumers are cautious about trusting media companies with their personal data. Hence, winning CT is more important than ever before when it comes to marketing activities [10]. Moreover, communication studies provide knowledge about content and audience trust and marketers employ that knowledge to unlock the full potential of AI technology by generating consumer-trusted content [11]. Recent research has focused on content marketing activities instead of content generation.

This study sheds light on the impact of AI generated content on audiences. Specifically, it examines whether AI generated content is effective when it comes to winning the trust of audiences, and it evaluates how marketers and brands can use AI effectively in their marketing activities. The research questions are:

RQ1: What are consumer perceptions of, and attitudes towards AIGC in content marketing

RQ2: How CT in AIGC could be Constructed?

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2. Theoretical Framing of this Study

2.1 Content Marketing in Social Media platforms

2.1.1 Content Marketing: Definitions

Amongst the various marketing tools, content has emerged as one of the most critical and influential resources [12]. Content marketing involves producing and distributing content effectively, initially through digital channels [13,14]. Content marketing "…denotes the creation and promotion of content assets to generate brand awareness, traffic growth, lead generation, and customers. The channels that can play a part in content marketing strategies include Blog posts, ebooks and whitepapers, Infographics, Online brochures and look books" [15]. It also involves producing and distributing content effectively to influence user behaviour through digital channels [13]. Recently, content creation and curation have become significantly influenced by AI-powered marketing [7,12]. As more content is created and curated, there has been a growing demand for content personalization and greater attention towards CT [11,16,17,18,19,20].

2.1.2 Types of Content in Social Media Platforms

The search for information appears to be one of the main motivations to participate in SM, as it provides such a vast amount of information. To achieve a marketing goal, marketers generate various types of content [4,13]. For example, brand advertising through online media providers is perceived as more trustworthy, and the ads are more effective [21].

Moreover, consumers are often highly motivated to generate content. Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is one of the most influential types of UGC, and this refers to all product information consumers communicate through online environments [22]. Reviews are another kind of eWOM, helpful online reviews are positively associated with purchase intention [23]. Factors related to online reviews, such as reviewing characteristics, considering timeliness, accuracy, and reviewer credibility, shape overall perceptions of the trustworthiness of reviews. Tien et al. (2018) adds that eWOM usefulness and eWOM credibility are predictors of the usefulness of eWOM and can further influence purchase intention [24].

Furthermore, from a marketing perspective, the significance of SMIs is growing daily [5]. SMIs have become an effective promotional and branding strategy [6,20,25]. Consumers exposed to celebrity posts about brands on Instagram perceive such individuals as more trustworthy. This leads to consumers forming more positive attitudes towards endorsed brands. Additionally, SMIs use their professional experiences to create content that affects followers' purchasing decisions through endorsements or recommendations on different SM platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. Hence, SMI should have continuous input into its trustworthiness content [26,27]. Furthermore, some studies have found that SMIs should focus on the essential attributes of influential content and emphasise the quality of content generated by AI to enhance consumer engagement [6,28,29]. Therefore, this study focuses on content generated by SMIs when they adopt AI to help with content generation.

2.2 Definitions, and Impacts of AI

AI is a buzzword. The term was coined in 1956 in a proposal by an elite group of computer scientists and mathematicians at the Dartmouth Conference [30]. AI is a form of intelligence exhibited by machines [31]; computers generate it by employing sensors to perceive and react to the outside environment. AI has further developed to understand human intelligence. In addition, at its current stage of development, AI can replace or augment the requisite expertise to make informed marketing decisions. In contrast, De Bruyn et al. (2020) caution against simply defining AI as the "intelligence demonstrated by machines" whilst failing to adequately describe the parameters of AI [32]. Furthermore, AI is "manifested by machines that exhibit aspects of human intelligence" [10]. This involves machines mimicking "intelligent human behaviour" including human physical and cognitive activities [33].

It is essential to demonstrate AI's marketing and business potential, such as automating business processes, gaining insights from data, or engaging customers and employees [1,34]. In most cultures, AI is associated with tangible, physical objects such as robots or highly advanced computer systems with human-like logic and conversational capabilities. These use texts, images, and videos to create an AI culture, as evidenced in media [1,35]. AI continues to impact and transform our society, commerce and everyday personal lives, rendering them unrecognizable from just a decade ago [5]. Promoting a culture in which AI-related technologies can be used as "black boxes" has been a process that has been underway over recent decades, market practitioners no need for dive into AI ("black boxes) but use AI to generate market content [38].

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There is no single definition of AI [39], but this study approaches AI as a useful marketing tool to engage customers, and further create an AI-in-use marketing culture.

2.2.1 Artificial Intelligence Generated Content (AIGC)

AIGC is a new content creation method that generates content according to AI technology to meet the requirements of users. It complements traditional content creation approaches like Professional Generated Content (PGC) and UGC [4]. AIGC has shown great potential for applications, and strong potential in terms of commercial value. The various types of AIGC content have been enriched through text, images, video and code [4]. The mainstream AIGC products in content marketing are summarised in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Mainstream AIGC products in content marketing

Major Function	Name	Company	Website
Generate text	ChatGPT/GPT-4	OpenAI	chat.openai.com
	Bard	Google	bard.google.com
	NewBing	Microsoft	www.bing.com/new
	ERNIE Bot	Baidu	yiyan.baidu.com
	Copilot	Github	github.com/features/copilot
Generate images	Midjourney	Midjourney	midjourney.com
	Stable diffusion	Stable diffusion	stablediffusionweb.com
	DALL.E	OpenAI	labs.openai.com
	Wén Xīn Yī Gé	Baidu	yige.baidu.com/creation
	StyleGAN	NVIDIA	stylegan-human.github.io/
Generate vedios	D-ID	D-ID	studio.d-id.com
	Glia	Glia	www.gliacloud.com/zh-hans
	CapCut	Jinri Toutiao (Today's Headlines)	www.capcut.cn
	DVD-GAN	DeepMind	deepmind.google/

Adopt from (Wu et al., 2023) and Product pages

The need for extreme content personalization has emerged from an increasing demand to generate automated insights using AI-powered content marketing [12, 40]. This need has been served by building content recommendation systems [40,41].

2.2.2 The Need for AI in Content Marketing

AI is worth studying, not only in terms of computer science but also in any context where it can be integrated into psychology, economics, and other social sciences. For example, AI can engage customers in marketing practices in transportation, sales processes, and online retailers [1, 35]. AI has radically changed digital marketing practices in several ways. It can, for examples, customize offers, simplify content creation, and gather and mobilise vast quantities of data on business choices. AI provides benefits in proliferating information and data sources, improving the data management capabilities of software, and designing intricate and advanced algorithms. It has also influenced the way brands and users interact with one another [2]. AI has also triggered the creation of a new digital marketing ecosystem to retain users and lead them to consumption. Many SM platforms and service providers feature targeted-marketing campaigns based on individual user histories, actions, and preferences. They create customized messages selected by sophisticated AI algorithms, including political messages and public opinions. These are then shared via SM [9].

AI can free up practitioners' time, allowing them to focus on crucial strategic work. AI-enabled task automation has gained prominence in content generalization [42]. The use of AI for monitoring news media coverage based on natural language processing. By providing quick feedback, AI also helps marketers improve their products and achieve customer satisfaction. For example, AI can facilitate data usage from previous campaigns to map out markets and understand customer preferences and behaviours.

2.3 Consumer Trust

2.3.1 What is Consumer Trust and its importance

A universal definition of trust does not exist [43]. In general, trust is understood as the willingness of the trustor to engage in an action based on positive expectations regarding the trustee [44]. CT is a dynamic and multi-faceted construct, previous researchers often consider the three dimensions of trust as ability, benevolence, and integrity [17]. Building and maintaining CT is a complex ongoing process that involves various factors that CT can be influenced by different contexts [16].

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CT is a significant antecedent of online purchase intentions. Muhammad et al., (2022) indicate both cognitive and affective attitudes jointly influent consumer behavioural intentions, with trust as a key mediating factor in the relationship between attitudinal antecedents and the willingness of consumers to share digital footprints on social media [45]. Focusing on Chinese online stores, scholars found that customer satisfaction and trust levels are positively associated with customer WOM behaviour, which further influences online shopping experiences [46]. Some studies have indicated that social interactional ties have a significant positive effect on social impact transfer factors and trust in online vendors [47]. Dr. Guerreiro used customer journey theory to explain the impact of SMI trust on customer travel decision-making. They focussed on evaluating the role of customer journey constructs (including desire, information search, evaluating alternatives, purchase decisions, satisfaction and experience sharing) when it comes to mediating the interrelation between SMI trust and the customer journey [48]. The results indicate that CT in SMI has a positive effect on the decision-making journey, and this mediates trust during each phase of travel decision-making [48]. Another study used quantitative questionnaires to investigate destination image perceptions, indicating a positive and significant relationship between the volume of online reviews and destination trust [49]. Trust in brand communities, acting as moderators within virtual social communities. Sholars found that trust in other users, similarities in personality traits with other users, and eWOM in online communities might affect the level of trust in a SM brand, such as Facebook user will trust another Facebook user instead of Telegram user [46].

2.3.2 Trusted Content

Trustworthy content on SM can impact consumer pre-purchase behaviour, and consumers are more likely to share reviews online based on their travel satisfaction. Alboqami (2023) sought to analyse trust levels amongst consumers in the context of virtual influence and identified source attractiveness (i.e., physical attractiveness and homophily), source credibility (i.e., expertise and authenticity), and unity (i.e., influencer, customer, and product) are salient variables [53].

Consumers voiced their concerns about user privacy [54].CT brings about consumer continuance intention in the content [16], which gives companies the opportunity to use AI to collect, predict and analyse user behaviour on their digital channels [55, 56]. CT impacts the propensity of customers to engage with AI [1,35]. Longoni et al. (2019) looked at medical decision making and found that customer hesitancy is linked to concerns about uniqueness-neglect (i.e., the AI is perceived as less able to identify and relate with customers' unique features). They further found that these reservations occur more amongst customers who scored higher on the 'personal sense of uniqueness' scale [36]. Luo et al. (2019) examined how (potential) customers engage with AI bots. They found that AI bots can be as effective as trained sales personnel, and inexperienced sales personnel. However, if it is disclosed that the customer is conversing with an AI bot, purchase rates drop by 75%. Where customers perceive of less empathy from AI bots, they tend to be curter when interacting with them, and purchase less [37,66].

It is important for brands to find the best match between consumers and content. In other words, an approach to gain the trust of consumers using AI is important. Lou and Yuan (2019) proposed an integrated SMI value model, arguing that the informative nature of influencer-generated content, as well as the influencer's perceived trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity to followers positively affect trust amongst other followers [20]. Oliveira et al., (2017) analysed various sources of trust, such as consumer characteristics, film characteristics, website infrastructure and interactions with consumers, suggested that trust has three main dimensions of trust-- competence, integrity, and benevolence [17]. Their findings suggest that high-trust consumers demonstrate a higher purchase intention. Sirdeshmukh et al., (2002) developed a framework to demonstrate the behaviours of service providers that build or deplete CT [18]. The context was CT in frontline employees and management policies and practices. Their problem-solving ability positivity effected CT. Li and Tsai (2022) applied multiple perspectives to analyse customer trust development in Airbnb. They indicated rating volume as a key guest-based factor and found that information quality and media richness positively affected levels of CT [16]. Furthermore, platform-based factors influenced CT in terms of environmental benefits, locational benefits, and authenticity. Bhalla (2020) emphasized that transparency is key, and organizations must be able to demonstrate that their systems and algorithms (including AI) are responsible, fair, ethical and explainable [11]. Li et al., (2019) argue that the characteristics of relevance, concreteness and positive story values are positively related to CT in We Media advertorials [19].

3. Methodology Justification

To achieve the purpose of this research, a qualitative approach involving a literature review was

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adopted [7]. Given its suitability, a systematic literature review strategy was employed to compile robust evidence on the central theoretical themes for this study. This permitted a systematic and transparent approach to capture and assess relevant literature [57]. Moreover, a systematic review was considered appropriate for this investigation because it enabled the identification of fundamental research gaps and critical indicators to guide future research.

For this study, 55 qualifying publications were evaluated in the context of AIGC. Initially, the research started with a name string search across databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, Sage, Springer, and Emerald using "Artificial Intelligence", "Content Marketing", and "Consumer trust". Organisational and institutional documents, such as the websites in table 1, were considered particularly useful. Additionally, the standard of document selections and the concentration of unique extracts can reflect the problems the researcher seeks as forms of evidence. This study is, therefore, based on document analysis as part of the review method. The study discusses practitioner and academic research implications and proposes a future research agenda to study CT through the accelerated adoption of AI across the content marketing landscape.

4. Constructing Consumer Trust in AIGC

CT is dynamic, and a multi-faceted construct [18]. It is also a major goal of content marketing practice which should be taken into account in content marketing practice [17]. Naseri and Noruzi (2018) proposed a basic framework of content marketing processes including content planning, content production, content distribution and content quality measurements [14]. Terho et al., (2022) proposed digital content marketing can be undertaken by conceptualising numerous activities containing three major themes that generate intelligence about customer journeys [58]. This creates a portfolio of valuable content and engages customers in content sharing. By considering content marketing and the information process associated with CT, this study identifies four major themes in content marketing: content production, content distribution, content analysis, and content engagement. An integrated model to inform CT in AIGC (Figure 1) is therefore proposed.

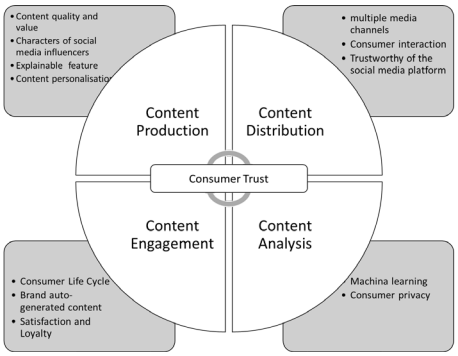

Figure 1: The core themes of content marketing

4.1 Content Production

4.1.1 Content Quality and Value

AI improves the efficiency of content production in content marketing, content creation and curation have been significantly influenced by adapted AI-powered marketing techniques [7,12]. One study of content marketing emphasized the quality and value of content for SMIs. Yet scholars argue that the informative value, influencer's trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity to followers positively affects followers' trust [20]. Most current research looking at content marketing demonstrates that messages are more effective when the perceived characteristics of the message source and the content of the message match. Furthermore, the utility of information is positively associated with purchase intention [23]. eWOM utility and eWOM credibility are adequate predictors of the utility of eWOM with implications for purchase intention [34]. When AIGC content is incorrect, the erosion of brand identity may jeopardize CT and the ongoing ability to optimize content. Consumers are less willing to share personal information with less trusted brands [59]. At present, the quality of AIGC content is significantly better than it was before [4].

Furthermore, a positive and significant relationship between the volume of online reviews and destination trust is clear [49]. Therefore, AI could innovate content, and particularly pictures and videos,

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through image recognition technology to improve the user experience. In terms of SMIs, scholars argue that the informative value of influencer-generated content, influencer's trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity to followers positively affect followers' trust.

4.1.2 Suggestions in relation to AIGC based on previous studies

Bhalla (2020) strongly suggests that transparency is key, and organizations must be able to demonstrate that their systems and algorithms (namely AI), are responsible, fair, ethical, and explainable [11]. Otherwise, customers will not proactively initiate AI applications with autonomous goals [1,35,50]. In line with the above, Kim and Duhachek (2020) argue that a message from an AI application is more persuasive when the message is the instruction manual of the product, because customers doubt whether AI can "understand" the importance of engaging in certain consumption behaviours [50]. Increasing the transparency of information generation would mean that users understand the process of content generation better. This could increase user trust in content [51]. Explaining and labelling systems can also increase trust.

4.1.3 Exploiting AIGC's ability to personalise information production

In contrast to traditional content production, more attention should be paid to interpretability and personalisation of AI-powered content marketing [12, 40]. Digital text coupled with natural language generation (NLG) to automate customized content could also support content marketing activities [52]. Consumers are more willing to share personal information with trusted brands, giving marketers the chance to generate more engaging content [59], and increase the 'personal sense of uniqueness' [36]. Moreover, the integration of artificial empathy into AI-enabled content could fill the gap between AI and consumer affective and experience [27]. Additionally, the centrality of information justification to prevent AIGC from leveraging individuals' internal biases.

4.2 Content Distribution

Content distribution is another key factor that affects markets and CT [13]. With the support of AIGC technology, marketers can improve the persuasiveness of content, and users' trust by improving the effect and accuracy of content dissemination. For example, semantic analysis by natural language processing technology can promote the reading experience and distribute the effects of content. Moreover, combined with content analysis (see 4.3 section) and big data technology for user profiling, behavioural analysis can be used to better grasp user needs based on feedback from content distribution.

4.2.1 The importance of Social Media Virtual Influencers (SMVIs) for content distribution

SMVIs, as a new type of influencer are important in the context of this study [60]. Gerlich (2023) indicated that customers could increasingly attract SMVIs since they are perceived as more trustworthy, credible, and relevant to customers [60]. Trust in online journalism, according to Grosser et al. (2016) is similar to human expertise, and AI systems can influence judgements quite effectively [61]. However, SMVIs who want to be perceived as trustworthy should avoid revealing their virtual nature to their followers. Instead, trust is developed through positive emotions and close relationships between SMVIs and their followers.

4.2.2 The importance of personalisation involving content distribution

Demand for content personalization emerged from a need to generate automated insights using AI-powered content marketing, and this has been addressed using content recommendation systems based on narrative science methodologies [12,40, 41]. Multimedia content (e.g., text, audio, image, and video) created by numerous social network platforms can be classified into different channels [8]. AI can use big data analysis to locate the most suitable digital channel, and then the user can provide positive feedback to distribute the content [62]. Personalization features could improve user satisfaction, user engagement and dialogue quality [63]. Those human-like rationales increase feelings of trust in non-experts operating AI.

4.2.3 Consumer interactions and consumer social networks

Research has found that trust in other users, similarity in personality traits with other users and eWOM in the online community might affect trust in SM brands [46]. For example, Liu et al. (2018) found trust in social media brand communities can translate into consumer brand trust, and that consumer engagement in SM brand communities promotes trust in the brand. Sholars have emphasised the role of social network building, indicating that social interactional ties have significant positive effects on social impact transfer factors and trust in online vendors [47]. When expert recommendations contradict peer

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opinion, the relative social influence of valence, group identity and AI must be considered [64]. AI can facilitate user interactions and help users maintain social relationships for information consumption through more effective guidance through personalize AIGC.

4.3 Content Analysis

Through AIGC technology, content analysis tends to find users' genuine needs and behavioural characteristics. This further optimises content production, distribution and marketing strategies. AI as intelligence exhibited by machines. Machine learning and deep learning work like a black box, and their work relies on large data sets, making privacy a concern [31]. For example, AI could facilitate data usage from previous marketing activities to map out the market and understand customer preferences and behaviours. People are unlikely to trust anything that is risky [31] or compromise their user privacy [54]. To better capture user data for business analytics, companies should make efforts to protect user privacy [11]. Clear policies to protect consumer privacy could result in greater trust and opportunities to use AI to collect, predict and analyse data [55, 56].

4.4 Content Engagement

Content marketing should focus on capturing attention, because consumers tend to ignore intrusive advertising [65]. Indeed, consumers prefer engaging, relevant, and valuable content. Consumers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioural engagement relates to brand-related sense-making, identification, and citizenship behaviours, the nature of consumer engagement is complex multidimensional and dynamic [65]. Engaged consumers exhibit enhanced CT, customer engagement and CT occurs when consumers form a satisfying relationship with content on SM platforms. By providing quick feedback, AI can help marketers improve their content quality to attract new customers. Furthermore, companies can follow up with consumers to improve the accuracy and effect of their marketing strategies using AIGC. Pertinent examples here include real-time bidding for advertisement placements and recommendation systems. In addition, AI arranges posts based on user preferences, and helps users easily create and share SM posts. AI-based algorithms and content can improve brand awareness and market influence by means of SMIs [29]. SMIs frequently distribute content amongst their audiences, but do not adequately engage them [28]. To build closer relations with followers, SMIs should also take seriously post-dissemination practices linked to engagement.

5. Conclusion

In terms of digital content marketing, a multi-facetted approach to understanding customer trust is necessary, and marketers should embrace AIGC. With advanced AI technology, AIGC has shown tremendous marketing value and application performance. It has attracted large numbers of new consumers and investments from numerous front-line companies in a short period. This study emphasises the significance of CT in content marketing, which is empowered by AIGC. The study explored how to use AIGC in content marketing to win CT and it identified four themes-- Content Production, Content Distribution, Content Analysis and Content Engagement. Suggestions were proposed to marketers and brands as to how they can use AIGC appropriately in their SMIs marketing activities. However, the development of AIGC still faces many challenges and opportunities. In conclusion, this review has provided useful ideas for the development of academia, industry, and business contexts. It has suggested future directions and insights for the further exploration of CT and AIGC.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the discourse on content marketing dynamics, offering theoretical contentions and a methodological approach. Companies use AIGC to gain CT and to influence their purchasing behaviour. However, they often fail to focus on the content itself. In line with that focus, the impact of AIGC on CT was underlined, and the advantages of using AIGC were highlighted. Within that focus, strategies to win CT were suggested using four major themes: content production, content distribution, content analysis and content engagement.

In terms of marketing practice, the central focus of this study was to suggest an AI-in-use marketing strategy for effectively gaining CT. The study suggests that content generation with AIGC not only emphasises quality and value, but further takes into account the importance of AIGC's to personalise information. In terms of the content distribution phase, marketers should make full use of the advantages of AIGC, to effectively personalise delivery information, and emphasise user interactions and user relationship network maintenance. Machine learning efficiency and privacy concerns should be taken

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into account in content analysis. Consumers should be further engaged with AIGC by involving AI in the consumer life cycle.

This study has proposed a pro-active and innovative content marketing strategy through the employment of AIGC that could effectively echo consumer needs. Beyond that, the recommendations enable businesses to build and improve CT. However, this study has obvious limitations, which must be borne in mind when adapting the findings. A key limitation of the study relates to the methodological approach. The conclusions are based on 55 relevant publications. Consequently, knowledge of how to build CT has not been elaborately quantitative. Future studies could consider a specific research context or adapt another research method, such as experimental design, to study CT formation and AIGC using specific variables.

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