

Report

How AI Is Changing the Future of Marketing



BY LIZ ALTON

HOW AI IS CHANGING THE FUTURE OF MARKETING

Today's fast pace of innovation in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) is staggering. At first glance, it sounds like the province of sci-fi books, movies, and television shows.

Yet, companies are marketing AI in numerous ways: personal assistants, zippy humanoid robots that complete house chores, self-regulating computers, or digital gadgets that remind us of human progress and technological innovation.

For marketers, however, AI is creating potential opportunities to consider for the long-term marketing mix.

Computers are becoming faster and more efficient in relaying our usage habits and patterns. Examples of AI in action range from The Royal Bank of Scotland's integrated sophisticated personal banking assistants, which help money-savvy consumers, to AI-created journalistic articles that could potentially be used for content marketing.

These advancements help us as marketers by providing better personalization, automating core services, and even expanding our vision of how key content is created.

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SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED?

Of course, not everyone is excited about AI. While there are a number of different concerns that range from Big Brother-esque fears to the simple challenges of managing yet another channel, a lot of those concerns have been addressed.

AI DEVELOPS QUICKLY

As computing and AI technology learns to self-manage tasks such as software updates, as shown in this University of Tübingen Super Mario game experiment, it can sometimes decide what's best for its own interface apart from the directions that system managers provide.

In other words, AI can become sentient to an extent, which does raise reliability questions for managers. A lot of companies that use chatbots, only give the AI pre-canned messages or have someone supervising the chatbot while it is in use to avoid problems.

CONSUMER DEMANDS WILL CHANGE

AI hasn't yet been released to the market at scale. However, it is likely to have an impact on the level of personalization and innate intelligence that consumers expect from their digital and even their real-world experiences.

For example, beacons, visual shopping, activity detection, and personalization are all being used in brick and mortar stores to improve marketing and connect better with customers.

AUTOMATION

As soon as 2030, automation via AI may impact jobs. What does this mean for tasks such as ad design, copywriting, or data analysis?

The Grid, for example, is already offering an AI-driven website design solution. However, a number of studies suggest that AI might not replace as many jobs as many fear.

HOW MARKETERS CAN ADAPT TO AI INNOVATION

Learn and embrace new skills: AI is continuously developing and being refined. As it develops, having access to digital media and coding skills will be a requirement.

Even if you're outside technology development, it's going to be important to have the technological literacy and skills to navigate the evolving landscape.

Find uses for personal assistants: Companies are in a race to develop the best use of personal assistant technology, as noted in a recent piece on Forbes. Marketers who find ways to leverage these Siri-like technologies will have an advantage moving forward.

Seek core marketing processes that can be enhanced with AI: Google's AI system, nicknamed "RankBrain," is an artificial intelligence tool that analyzes search activities to improve search results.

For marketers and businesses, it's important to look at core marketing and business processes that can be enhanced and streamlined with AI.

HOW IS AI BEING USED?

Chatbots. These tools help marketing and sales teams (and all kinds of other staff) gather information from leads and answer routine questions, freeing up a lot a lot of time for your staff. This automation saves a lot of time and money.

Digital assistants. This includes voice powered assistances help busy departments conduct a variety of tasks.



Whether it's locating a document or making a change on a PowerPoint® slide, the increasing availability of intelligent assistants is going to automate significant portions of the marketing workflow.

Machine learning for better experiences. If artificial intelligence is the ability of a computer to mimic a human in some meaningful way or crunch data faster than we ever could, machine learning is about putting that capacity on turbo-charge.

For example, with machine learning, AI devices can refine their performance over time, based on the data they see. As a result, it's possible to learn more about your audience and further refine the experience you're offering customers.

AI can seem far off in the future. But the reality is that it's here already, helping create content and deliver better and more organic search results.

Marketers need to keep a finger on the pulse of this evolving channel, and finding ways to adapt it to your business can give you an important edge moving forward.

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