

Research on the Mechanism and Governance Path of Gen AI Content Marketing in Reducing Customer Acquisition Costs and Enhancing Customer Retention Performance

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Abstract

Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) is Changing How Companies Produce, Distribute and Use Customer Relationship Content for Content Marketing. Based on nearly three years of English-language research and publicly available industry statistics, this paper will study the relationship between customer acquisition cost and the performance of customer retention. Research on How Artificial Intelligence(AI) can help create personalised marketing materials and manage customer communication. Based on the above research results, Gen AI can reduce the cost of high-quality content production, increase the efficiency of the lead-to-conversion path, and strengthen all links in a company's customer journey. If we do not conduct fact-checking and brand consistency management to ensure the compliance constraints of data, low-cost content expansion will also lead to a loss of trust, false promises and reduced retention. The paper also puts forward several strategies: an integrated cost-conversion-retention evaluation system, human-machine collaborative review, incremental experiment identification, and an auditable governance matrix, and provides guidance for businesses to turn Gen AI into a customer asset management capability rather than just a content tool.

Keywords Gen AI; Content Marketing; Customer Acquisition Cost; Customer Retention; Customer Relationship Management; Marketing Performance

1 Introduction

The commercial application of Gen AI has shifted content marketing from labour-intensive creation to a hybrid model of model-assisted production, manual review and tuning, and data feedback iteration. The company can quickly create many different kinds of advertising copy, email subjects, social media posts, product introductions, customer education materials and various versions of landing page content, and tailor the expressions according to customer profiles and purchase stages. Compared with the old way, AI can reduce the added cost of the first draft and test material, and also increase the speed at which the marketing team responds to different groups. According to the above studies, Gen AI has been applied in marketing, customer communication and automation of marketing for some time [1], and AI-driven marketing is now moving beyond tool usage into organisational-level adjustments [2].

Customer acquisition cost is the average amount a company has invested in obtaining a new, effective customer, and the retention performance of a customer refers to how long they continue to purchase, renew subscriptions, engage, and recommend the service. The two are not unrelated; if the AI content is merely low-cost exposure and a short-term clickbait, it will diminish the consumer's feeling of brand authenticity and lead to an increase in customer churn, even though the cost of customer acquisition has dropped temporarily. The first problem that this paper would address is how to use Gen AI for content marketing to boost customer retention and lower the cost of new customer acquisition, as well as identifying the limitations and constructing governance systems for doing so.

2 Current Status Analysis of the Research Topic

2.1 Application Diffusion and Content Production Restructuring

Gen AI is no longer a simple text generator; it is now a complete platform that has taken on all the tasks in a project, such as research on topics and users, creation of materials, modification of advertisements, automation of emails, and maintenance of customer service knowledge bases. Research from the perspective of consumer rights suggests that AI content should serve the rights to value, brand and relationship, and not only focus on production [3]. However, research on social media content creation also shows that consumers may reduce their assessment of brand authenticity due to the recognition of AI generation [4]. Therefore, the performance release of Gen AI content marketing must fall under the general framework of efficiency improvement and trust maintenance.

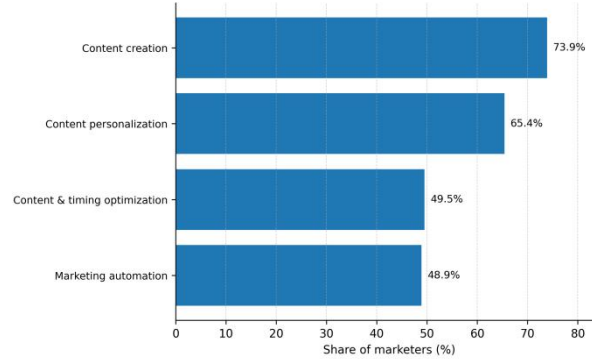


Fig. 1. Main applications of Ai in marketing

As shown in Figure 1, the four types of applications for AI in marketing are content creation, personalisation of content, optimisation of content and timing, and marketing automation; among them, content creation accounts for the largest proportion. Therefore, it is found that Gen AI has mainly changed the content supply side, and to effectively reduce customer acquisition costs and improve customer retention, this content should also be matched with the customer segmentation, channel timing and purchase stage.

2.2 Performance Improvement and Organizational Integration

Based on the above public survey, an increasing number of enterprises have begun using AI for marketing. According to the CMO Survey 2026 report, artificial intelligence is now being applied in marketing content creation, personalisation, automation [5], and the HubSpot 2026 report also indicates that most marketers are employing AI for content and media production [6]. At the same time, B2B content marketing research indicates that the objectives of content marketing have covered brand awareness, demand generation, customer nurturing, loyalty and revenue contribution [7]. Therefore, the value of Gen AI is not only to produce content more rapidly but also to link the stages of content creation, lead nurturing and customer success in a continuous manner.

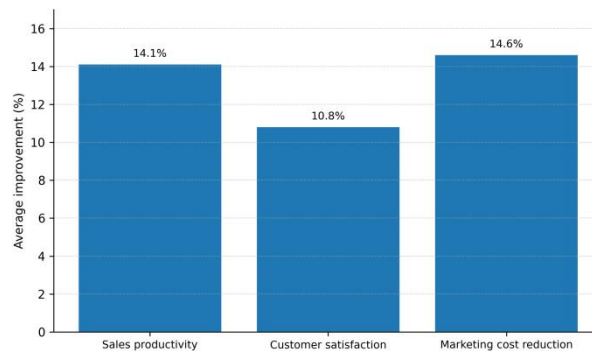


Fig. 2. Average improvement in marketing business results driven by AI

As shown in Figure 2, AI has improved the efficiency of sales and customer satisfaction at a lower cost. Reduce marketing costs to lower the cost of new-customer acquisition directly, and improve consumer satisfaction to form a foundation of loyal consumers. Based on the above data, the number of AI-generated content pieces for promotion should also be evaluated along with their cost, conversion rate, user satisfaction and relationship-building value.

Table 1. Research variables and measurement methods

Construct	Abbrev.	Operationalization	Expected Link	Source
GenAI content intensity	GAI	AI-assisted asset share	Lower CAC; higher retention	Content log
Production efficiency	CPE	Qualified assets per labor hour	Lower cost per lead	Workflow data
Personalization fit	PF	Match between content and customer stage	Higher conversion and renewal	CRM/CDP
Trust quality	TQ	Accuracy, transparency, brand consistency	Retention protection	Audit record
Acquisition cost	CAC	Cost per qualified new customer	Outcome variable	Finance/CRM
Retention performance	RP	Renewal, repeat purchase, active use	Outcome variable	CRM/CS

Table 1 shows the four antecedent variables for Gen AI content marketing in the following rows: usage intensity, productivity, personalised matching and trust quality; the two outcome variables are customer acquisition cost and retention performance. This division will not be an all-or-nothing case; instead, the enterprise can connect various systems such as content platforms, CRM, financial data, and customer success records.

3 Raising Questions

3.1 Cost Reduction Does Not Necessarily Mean Improved Customer Quality

Gen AI can significantly reduce the cost of the first draft and material testing, but the core of customer acquisition cost is the average investment in obtaining effective customers, not the lowest cost of content production. If a large amount of AI content attracts traffic but has low intent, poor matching or a low payment ability, then although the cost per click has fallen, there may be increased costs for sales follow-up, unsubsubscription and churn. Based on research in behavioural reasoning theory, it has been shown that the factors affecting a user's use of Gen AI marketing include convenience, but also trust, risk, rationality and other considerations [8]. Therefore, the two should be differentiated: "reduced content costs" and "increased efficiency in acquiring high-quality customers".

3.2 Retention Improvement Depends on Sustained Relevance and Trust

After-sale service quality has also been influencing a customer's expectation of the product in the beginning. If AI content is excessively enthusiastic about its functions, makes false promises, or creates a highly personalized experience, there will be a discrepancy between the customer's actual experience and the marketing promise; if it is used to guide on-boarding education, address problems, inform of upgrades and renewal periods, and keep value-conscious in the customer's minds, it will help them continue to feel the product's value. According to relationship marketing research, AI functions need to be developed into flexible customer relationship capabilities for continuous, long-term service of the public good [9].

3.3 Ethics and Compliance Constitute the Performance Boundary

Gen AI content marketing is also prone to the following risks: factual inaccuracies, copyright infringement, privacy breaches, amplified bias, lack of transparency, and brand-tone deviation. Research on the ethical requirements for brand content creation has identified the following as the basic governance links for Gen AI content [10]: transparency, privacy, intellectual property, fairness, accuracy, accountability and compliance. The above are the demands for keeping customers happy, and as satisfaction is based on trust, this trust will be built through consistent content and fair handling of data.

Table 2. Mechanism of action, performance path and risk boundary

Mechanism	CAC Pathway	Retention Pathway	Management Focus	Risk
Production scale	Lower cost per asset	More lifecycle touchpoints	Quality gate	Content overload
Personalization	Higher qualified conversion	Better product-use relevance	Consent and relevance	Privacy concern
Rapid testing	Faster message learning	More timely support	Incremental experiment	Short-term bias
Knowledge support	Lower sales support cost	Fewer use barriers	Knowledge governance	False answer
Trust governance	Lower complaint cost	Higher relationship stability	Audit and disclosure	Brand damage

As shown in Table 2, the five types of Gen AI-driven content marketing activities are classified as: production scale, personalisation, rapid experimentation, knowledge support and trust regulation. Although all the above mechanisms can reduce the cost of customer acquisition, they may also harm the quality of retention; without data authorisation, fact-checking, and long-term metric constraints, technological efficiency will bring new risks to the brand and customer relationship.

4 Problem Solving and Strategies

4.1 Establish an Integrated Indicator System for "Cost-Conversion-Retention"

The first is a modification to the all-in-one rating method. Content teams generally prioritise the quantity of output, readership and engagement rate; campaign teams focus on cost-per-click and cost-per-lead; and customer success teams focus on renewal and churn rates. Gen AI will rapidly increase the amount of content, and if only single-point metrics are used for evaluation, it may lead to the expansion of low-differentiation content. Reduce the costs of AI content and improve lead-to-customer conversion rates, shorten the sales cycle, boost the rate of post-purchase behaviour, increase the frequency of reuse and renewal, and reduce complaint rates.

4.2 Implement a Human-Machine Collaborative Content Review Mechanism

Four levels of review are required for the AI-generated content: facts, brand, law and ethics. Before publication, limit the model's input to specify the brand's tone and attitude, forbidden expressions, real product data, etc. Verify the price, functions, case studies, data and guarantees of the published content. Based on the publication data for conversion rate, user complaints, unsubsubscription reasons and retention factors, build a keyword library and content templates. The goal of human-machine cooperation is not to reduce the need for people but to have people be responsible for high-risk commitments, important customer contact points and the long-term image of the brand.

4.3 Identifying True Performance Contributions Through Incremental Experiments

Do not credit AI in the analysis of the results for seasonally low or high periods, budget adjustments, promotions, or transfers of online or offline media. The following are more reasonable methods: randomized controlled trials, regional grouping, customer segmentation and a phased rollout experiment. Under the same budget and similar audience conditions, compare the effective lead cost, first-purchase conversion rate, sales cycle, churn rate and retention rate of AI-assisted content and human-generated content. A reduction in customer acquisition cost is only beneficial if the quality of the new customers does not drop and their long-term value to the company remains the same or rises.

4.4 Incorporate Retained Content into the Customer Success Process

Most enterprises use Gen AI mainly for customer acquisition content creation and neglect post-purchase customer education and value maintenance. The contents of the retention stage are onboarding tutorials, feature reminders, upgrade recommendations, problem explanations, renewal communications and churn reduction. Design content scripts for the new user stage, value discovery stage, stable use stage, risk warning stage, and renewal stage of businesses to have AI generate personalised support based on

customer usage data. However, the frequency, context and rules of automated outreach must also include provisions for human intervention to avoid repeated disturbances and incorrect directions.

Table 3. Gen AI content marketing governance matrix

Layer	Control Action	KPI	Owner	Trigger
Data input	Remove sensitive or unlicensed data	Compliance rate	Data owner	Dataset upload
Prompt design	Use approved brand and legal constraints	Reuse accuracy	Content strategist	Campaign launch
Output review	Check facts, claims, and tone.	Error rate	Marketing/legal	External release
Transparency	Disclose AI-assisted content when needed	Disclosure coverage	Brand owner	High-risk content
Experiment	Compare incremental CAC and retention	Lift and confidence	Growth team	Budget decision
Feedback learning	Update prompt and knowledge base	Complaint reduction	CRM owner	Post-campaign review

Table 3 elaborates on the scope of governance by adding data input, prompts, output review, transparent disclosure, experiment evaluation and feedback learning. This matrix will convert technical risks into a distribution of responsibilities and quantifiable indicators to avoid inaccurate content, breaking promises and losing trust; thus, the efficiency of customer acquisition and retention will be improved.

5 Discussion

The two kinds of harm from Gen AI marketing are. AI can reduce the costs of content creation and testing, add customised functions for personalised services, etc., and thereby help more SMEs provide personalised services more efficiently. At the same time, model subscriptions, API calls, data governance, copyright screening, manual review and brand repair may all be hidden costs. If the company only considers the cost of human writing and compares it to the cost of AI generation, it will be short-sighted and fail to increase customer acquisition. Low marginal costs will also lead to a large amount of content; thus, user attention will be divided, and their trust in the material will decline after repeated exposure to the same kind.

Therefore, Gen AI should not be used to outsource content production but rather designated as the module for handling customer data. Increase the conversion rate of qualified leads and reduce sales explanation costs to lower new customer acquisition costs, and provide all-weather convenience, effective assistance, and other services to enhance customer loyalty. Limit customer acquisition costs through customer lifetime value, increase investment in high-retention, high-repurchase, and high-referral customer groups, reduce the volume of automated content sent to low-match traffic, and thus avoid short-term growth that masks long-term churn.

6 Conclusion

Analyze the Effect of Gen AI Content Marketing on Customer Acquisition Cost and Customer Retention Performance in This Paper. AI can lower customer acquisition costs and enhance the quality of customer retention by optimising the efficiency of content production, personalised matching, quick tests and customer knowledge support. However, these effects will only be maintained if the quality of the customers and the authenticity of the content and compliance governance improve at the same time. Build a whole-aspect assessment system of costs, conversions and retention for the enterprise, use human-machine cooperation for evaluation, identify true performance contributions through step-by-step experiments, and build a transparent content governance matrix. In the future, more research will be carried out to explore the applications of Gen AI-powered content marketing in various industries and on different platforms at all stages of the customer life cycle, using data from enterprise marketing automation logs and customer behaviour data.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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生成式人工智能內容營銷降低獲客成本與提升客戶留存績效的作用機制及治理路徑研究

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摘要：生成式人工智慧正在改變企業生產、分發和使用客戶關係內容開展內容行銷的方式。基於近三年的英文研究成果與公開行業統計數據，本文考察生成式人工智慧內容行銷與客戶獲取成本、客戶留存績效之間的關係，並分析人工智慧如何支援個性化行銷材料生成與客戶溝通管理。研究表明，生成式人工智慧能夠降低高質量內容的生產成本，提高線索到轉化環節的運行效率，並強化企業客戶旅程中的各個觸點；但若缺乏事實核驗、品牌一致性管理與數據合規約束，低成本內容擴張也可能引發信任流失、過度承諾和留存下降。為此，本文提出構建「成本—轉化—留存」一體化評價體系、實施人機協同審核、透過增量實驗識別真實績效貢獻，並建立可審計的治理矩陣，以推動企業將生成式人工智慧從單一內容工具轉化為客戶資產管理能力。

關鍵詞：人工智能；內容行銷；客戶留存；行銷績效

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