International Journal of Progressive Sciences and Technologies (IJPSAT)
ISSN: 2509-0119.

https://ijpsat.org/
Vol. 58 No. 2 August 2026, pp. 1007-1015

Artificial Intelligence in Contemporary Marketing

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Abstract: The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) is significantly transforming marketing practices and enabling organizations to utilize large volumes of consumer data for more effective strategic decision-making. AI-driven technologies, including machine learning algorithms, predictive analytics, and recommendation systems, allow firms to analyze complex datasets and generate valuable insights into consumer behavior and market trends. This paper examines the role of artificial intelligence in enhancing customer analytics and supporting data-driven decision-making in contemporary marketing environments.

The study adopts a conceptual research approach based on a systematic review of recent academic literature on artificial intelligence, digital marketing, and customer analytics. By synthesizing theoretical perspectives and empirical findings, the paper explores how AI technologies help organizations identify consumer behavior patterns, predict purchasing intentions, and optimize marketing strategies.

The findings suggest that AI-enabled customer analytics significantly improves firms' ability to develop personalized marketing communication, enhance customer engagement, and support more informed managerial decisions. At the same time, the adoption of AI technologies raises important challenges related to data privacy, transparency, and ethical use of consumer data.

The study contributes to the growing literature on AI-driven marketing by providing insights into how artificial intelligence enhances customer analytics and strengthens decision-making processes in modern marketing strategies.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, marketing analytics, customer analytics, decision-making, digital marketing.

1. Introduction

The widespread use of social networking platforms, e-commerce channels, mobile technologies, and online consumer engagement has created unprecedented opportunities for businesses to derive actionable insights and enhance marketing effectiveness. The expansion of customer data has created new opportunities for marketers to understand consumer behavior more accurately and to transform raw information into strategic insights. Marketing analytics has therefore moved beyond descriptive reporting toward more advanced, predictive, and automated forms of analysis that support managerial decision-making (Wedel & Kannan, 2016). In this context, Artificial Intelligence offers significant potential because it enables organizations to process large volumes of structured and unstructured data, identify behavioral patterns, and generate insights that are difficult to obtain through traditional analytical methods (Ma & Sun, 2020).

Among the various applications of artificial intelligence in marketing, its ability to strengthen customer analytics represents one of its most significant contributions. By using AI-based analytical systems, firms can predict customer preferences, estimate

purchase intentions, identify churn risk, recommend relevant products, and evaluate the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. These capabilities strengthen decision-making because they reduce uncertainty and allow managers to base strategic choices on evidence rather than intuition alone. Davenport et al. (2020) argue that AI is expected to transform both marketing strategies and customer behavior, particularly by changing how firms interact with consumers and how marketing decisions are made.

The extensive use of consumer data for analytical purposes has intensified concerns regarding data privacy, decision-making transparency, algorithmic fairness, customer trust, and the ethical management of personal information. Puntoni et al. (2021) emphasize that consumer experiences with AI involve not only benefits such as convenience and personalization, but also potential psychological and social concerns related to data capture, classification, delegation, and interaction with intelligent systems. For this reason, the use of AI in marketing should be guided by ethical responsibility and by a clear understanding of how consumers perceive AI-driven practices.

The paper aims to discuss how AI technologies contribute to customer insight generation, personalized marketing, predictive analysis, and strategic decision-making. Meantime, it considers the challenges associated with AI implementation, especially issues of data privacy, trust, transparency, and ethical marketing practice.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Conceptualizing Artificial Intelligence in Marketing

AI has become an important theoretical and practical concept in modern marketing because it allows firms to analyze complex customer data, automate marketing activities, and support strategic decision-making. From a marketing perspective, artificial intelligence encompasses advanced computational technologies designed to analyze complex datasets, uncover patterns in consumer and market behavior, anticipate future developments, and generate actionable insights that contribute to more informed and effective marketing decisions. Unlike traditional marketing tools, which often depend on manual analysis and historical reporting, AI-based systems are able to process large volumes of structured and unstructured data and generate insights in real time (Ma & Sun, 2020). This makes AI particularly relevant in contemporary markets and personalized communication.

From a strategic marketing perspective, AI is not limited to operational automation. It can support several stages of marketing activity, including marketing research, segmentation, targeting, positioning, personalization, customer relationship management, and performance evaluation. Huang and Rust (2021) propose that AI contributes to marketing through different forms of intelligence: mechanical AI, which automates repetitive tasks; thinking AI, which supports analytical and predictive decision-making; and feeling AI, which helps firms understand customer emotions and interactions. According to Rust (2020), technological advances such as AI, big data, and digital networks are transforming marketing from traditional transactional approaches toward more customer-centric, data-driven, and service-oriented strategies. This framework shows that AI can be integrated not only into technical processes but also into broader marketing strategy.

2.2. Artificial Intelligence and Customer Analytics

In data-rich environments, marketing analytics has become essential because firms collect information from multiple sources, including websites, mobile applications, social media, loyalty programs, online reviews, and transaction records. Wedel and Kannan (2016) argue that marketing analytics supports decision-making by transforming structured and unstructured data into useful managerial insights. AI strengthens this process by allowing firms to identify hidden patterns, classify customers more accurately, and predict future behaviors such as purchase intention, customer churn, brand loyalty, and response to marketing campaigns.

By incorporating artificial intelligence, customer analytics has evolved from explaining historical patterns to anticipating future customer behavior and informing strategic actions. Descriptive analytics involves the systematic examination of historical data to reveal underlying patterns and assess previous performance, whereas predictive analytics relies on statistical methods and analytical modeling techniques to anticipate probable trends and estimate future outcomes. Prescriptive analytics goes further by suggesting possible actions that managers can take. Through machine learning algorithms, firms can analyze customer

preferences, browsing behavior, demographic characteristics, and previous purchases in order to design more accurate marketing strategies (Ma & Sun, 2020). As a result, customer analytics becomes more dynamic and responsive, allowing organizations to adjust marketing decisions according to changing customer needs.

2.3. AI, Personalization, and Customer Engagement

Personalized marketing refers to the process of delivering products, services, messages, and recommendations that are adapted to individual customer needs and preferences. AI supports personalization by analyzing customer data and generating individualized recommendations, targeted advertisements, personalized emails, dynamic pricing offers, and customized digital experiences. Kumar et al. (2019) explain that AI can improve personalized engagement marketing by helping firms create, communicate, and deliver offerings that are more relevant to individual consumers.

The theoretical importance of personalization lies in its ability to strengthen customer engagement and customer satisfaction. When customers receive relevant recommendations or personalized communication, they may perceive the firm as more responsive to their needs. However, personalization also depends on the responsible use of customer data. If consumers feel that firms collect or use personal data without transparency, personalization may create discomfort instead of trust. Therefore, AI-driven personalization should be understood as both an opportunity and a challenge in marketing theory. It can improve customer experience, but it also requires ethical data management and clear communication with consumers (Puntoni et al., 2021).

2.4. AI and Marketing Decision-Making

Decision-making is a central function of marketing management. Managers must decide which customers to target, what products to offer, how to price them, which channels to use, and how to evaluate campaign performance. AI enhances marketing decision-making by reducing uncertainty and supporting evidence-based managerial choices. Davenport et al. (2020) argue that AI is likely to transform both marketing strategies and customer behavior because it changes how firms collect information, interact with consumers, and make strategic decisions.

AI can support decision-making at different levels. At the operational level, it can automate routine decisions such as email timing, product recommendations, or customer service responses. At the tactical level, it can help firms optimize advertising budgets, identify profitable customer segments, and evaluate campaign performance. At the strategic level, AI can support long-term decisions related to market positioning, customer relationship management, and competitive advantage. In this sense, AI acts as a decision-support mechanism that combines data processing power with managerial judgment. However, Ma and Sun (2020) emphasize that machine learning in marketing should not replace human insight; rather, it should be combined with marketing theory and domain knowledge.

2.5. AI, Consumer Experience, and Ethical Considerations

Although AI offers major benefits for marketing analytics and decision-making, its use also raises important ethical and managerial concerns. The widespread use of artificial intelligence also introduces several governance and ethical issues, such as protecting personal information, ensuring unbiased algorithmic outcomes, maintaining transparency in AI-driven decisions, preventing excessive dependence on automated systems, addressing concerns over digital consumer monitoring, and promoting greater transparency about how customer data are collected, analyzed, and applied. Puntoni et al. (2021) identify several types of consumer experiences with AI, including data capture, classification, delegation, and social interaction. Their perspective suggests that consumers do not experience AI only as a technical system, but also as part of their psychological and social relationship with firms. These findings are also consistent with customer experience research, which argues that AI-enabled personalization enhances customer journeys when supported by transparency, trust, and responsible data practices (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Verhoef et al., 2015).

De Bruyn et al. (2020) also explain that AI in marketing creates both opportunities and risks. While AI can improve knowledge creation and knowledge transfer, it may also produce problems when algorithms are difficult to explain, when objectives are poorly defined, or when biased data leads to unfair outcomes. Therefore, responsible AI implementation requires firms to ensure

transparency, fairness, accountability, and respect for consumer privacy. In marketing theory, this means that AI should not be studied only as a tool for efficiency and profit, but also as a system that influences customer trust, consumer autonomy, and ethical business practice.

2.6. Theoretical Link Between AI, Customer Analytics, and Decision-Making

The relationship between AI, customer analytics, and decision-making can be explained through a data-driven marketing perspective. AI improves the collection, processing, and interpretation of customer data. Improved customer analytics then provides deeper insights into customer needs, preferences, and behaviors. The analytical intelligence derived from these processes strengthens managerial decision-making by facilitating more precise customer segmentation, effective identification of target markets, tailored marketing initiatives, improved campaign performance, and the strategic development of customer relationships.

Therefore, AI can be viewed as an enabling technology that strengthens the connection between customer knowledge and managerial action.

Contemporary research also emphasizes that AI should be viewed as a strategic organizational capability rather than merely a technological innovation because it supports value creation, organizational learning, and competitive advantage across marketing functions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020; Davenport & Mittal, 2022).

Moreover, systematic reviews conclude that AI-powered customer analytics improves segmentation accuracy, demand forecasting, and customer lifetime value estimation, thereby strengthening evidence-based marketing decisions (Chintalapati & Pandey, 2022).

Based on the reviewed theory, AI contributes to marketing in three main ways. First, it improves analytical accuracy by identifying patterns in large and complex datasets. Second, it supports customer-centered marketing by enabling personalization and predictive customer insights. Third, it improves decision-making by providing managers with timely, evidence-based recommendations. Without transparency, data protection, and human oversight, AI may reduce consumer trust and create risks for both firms and customers. Thus, the theoretical foundation of this topic suggests that AI in marketing should be understood as a strategic, analytical, and ethical phenomenon.

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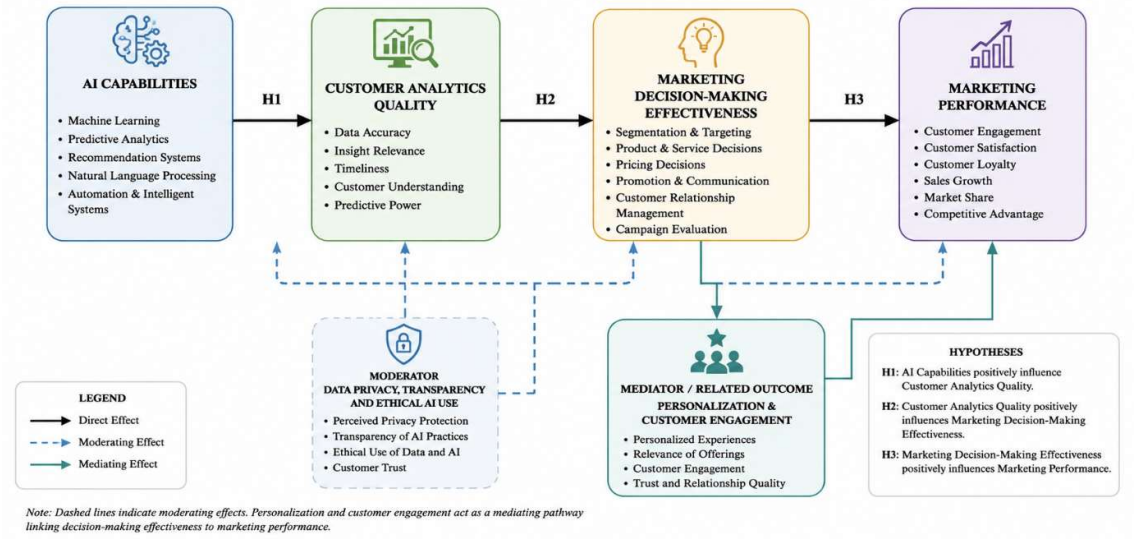
Figure 1. Proposed Theoretical Model: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Marketing Decision-Making and Performance



Note: Dashed lines indicate moderating effects. Personalization and customer engagement act as a mediating pathway linking decision-making effectiveness to marketing performance.

3. Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach based on a systematic review and thematic synthesis of academic literature concerning artificial intelligence in marketing, customer analytics, personalization, managerial decision-making, and ethical considerations. A systematic literature review provides a structured and transparent approach to identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing existing knowledge within a particular research field (Snyder, 2019; Tranfield et al., 2003). This methodological approach was considered appropriate for the present study because it facilitates the integration of theoretical perspectives and previous empirical findings concerning the growing role of artificial intelligence in contemporary marketing.

Relevant academic publications were identified through searches of major scholarly databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. The literature search employed combinations of keywords and search terms such as *artificial intelligence in marketing*, *AI-driven customer analytics*, *machine learning in marketing*, *predictive marketing analytics*, *AI and marketing decision-making*, *AI personalization*, and *ethical artificial intelligence in marketing*. Priority was given to peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and other scholarly publications directly related to the objectives of the study. Following established recommendations for systematic literature reviews, the search and selection process focused on identifying studies that were relevant to the research topic and capable of contributing to the conceptual development of the field (Snyder, 2019; Page et al., 2021).

The selection of the literature was guided by predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Studies were considered relevant when they examined the application of artificial intelligence in marketing, the contribution of AI technologies to customer analytics and personalization, the role of data-driven technologies in managerial decision-making, or the ethical and governance challenges associated with AI adoption. Publications that lacked a clear connection to the marketing context or provided insufficient theoretical or empirical relevance to the research objectives were excluded. The application of explicit selection criteria contributes to greater transparency and consistency in the literature review process (Tranfield et al., 2003).

Following the literature selection process, the identified studies were examined through qualitative thematic analysis. Thematic analysis provides a systematic and flexible method for identifying, organizing, and interpreting recurring themes and patterns within qualitative information (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Accordingly, the theoretical arguments and empirical findings reported in

the selected studies were organized into four principal thematic areas: (1) artificial intelligence and customer analytics, (2) AI-enabled personalization and customer engagement, (3) artificial intelligence and marketing decision-making, and (4) ethical and managerial challenges associated with AI implementation. This thematic classification provided the analytical structure for comparing findings across previous studies and identifying recurring relationships among the main concepts examined in the paper.

The subsequent stage of the analysis involved synthesizing the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence identified in the selected literature. Particular attention was given to understanding how AI capabilities contribute to improved customer analytics, how enhanced analytical capabilities influence marketing decision-making, and how these processes may affect broader marketing outcomes. Ethical considerations, including data privacy, algorithmic transparency, consumer trust, and human oversight, were also incorporated into the analytical process.

Based on the synthesis of the reviewed literature, the study develops a conceptual framework illustrating the relationships among AI capabilities, customer analytics quality, marketing decision-making effectiveness, and marketing performance. Conceptual frameworks can contribute to theory development by integrating existing knowledge, clarifying relationships among theoretical constructs, and identifying directions for future empirical investigation (Jabareen, 2009). The proposed framework additionally recognizes the potential moderating influence of data quality, privacy, transparency, and ethical AI practices, as well as the mediating role of personalization and customer engagement.

Consequently, the methodology combines a systematic review of academic literature, qualitative thematic analysis, and conceptual framework development. This integrated methodological approach provides a structured basis for examining existing knowledge and developing a comprehensive understanding of the strategic role of artificial intelligence in customer analytics and marketing decision-making.

4. Empirical Interpretation and Discussion

Since this paper is based on secondary academic literature rather than primary survey data, the empirical interpretation is developed through the analysis of previous studies on Artificial Intelligence in marketing, customer analytics, and decision-making. The reviewed literature indicates that AI has become a significant tool for improving how firms collect, process, and interpret customer information. In data-rich marketing environments, companies increasingly depend on structured and unstructured data from digital platforms, transactions, social media, and customer interactions to guide marketing decisions. Wedel and Kannan (2016) emphasize that marketing analytics supports managerial decision-making by transforming large volumes of customer data into useful insights. Recent discussions additionally stress that explainability, accountability, and human oversight are becoming essential principles for trustworthy AI implementation in marketing environments (Dwivedi et al., 2023).

4.1. Interpretation of AI in Customer Analytics

The literature consistently demonstrates that artificial intelligence has substantially enhanced customer analytics by expanding the analytical capabilities available to marketing professionals. Whereas conventional marketing analysis is generally based on historical sales data, demographic segmentation, and aggregate consumer trends, AI facilitates a more granular and continuously evolving assessment of customer behavior. Machine learning and predictive analytical methods enable organizations to identify purchasing preferences, detect behavioral patterns, estimate customer lifetime value, and anticipate customer churn. Ma and Sun (2020) explain that machine learning methods are increasingly relevant in marketing because they help connect computational power with consumer insight and marketing theory.

This means that AI does not only describe what customers have done in the past, but also helps predict what they are likely to do in the future. For example, AI systems can estimate which customers are more likely to buy a product, respond to a campaign, abandon a service, or engage with a brand. As a result, customer analytics becomes more proactive. Firms are able to move from general decision-making toward more precise and customer-oriented strategies.

Future developments in generative AI are expected to further transform customer analytics, content creation, and marketing decision support, making responsible governance and explainable AI increasingly important research priorities (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020).

4.2. Interpretation of AI in Personalization and Customer Engagement

A prominent finding across the literature is that artificial intelligence has transformed the delivery of personalized marketing. Its analytical capabilities enable organizations to create highly customized customer experiences by adapting communications, product suggestions, promotional activities, and digital services to the specific interests, behaviors, and expectations of each consumer. Kumar et al. (2019) argue that AI supports personalized engagement marketing by helping firms create, communicate, and deliver offerings that are more relevant to customers.

Empirical evidence suggests that artificial intelligence contributes to stronger customer engagement by improving the relevance and timeliness of marketing interactions. Through the analysis of consumer data, AI allows firms to deliver highly tailored recommendations, promotional offers, and digital experiences that correspond to individual customer preferences. Such personalized interactions can strengthen customers' perceptions of organizational responsiveness and enhance their overall experience. However, the effectiveness of these initiatives is closely linked to data quality and the level of consumer confidence in the organization. If personalization practices are considered excessive or intrusive, they may undermine trust and lead to adverse customer reactions. Therefore, the successful implementation of AI-enabled personalization requires transparent data governance, ethical standards, and responsible management of customer information.

4.3. Interpretation of AI in Marketing Decision-Making

AI also has a strong influence on marketing decision-making. Within the marketing function, managerial responsibilities encompass a wide range of strategic decisions, including customer segmentation, target market identification, pricing policy formulation, promotional planning, customer relationship management, and performance evaluation of marketing initiatives. AI supports these decisions by reducing uncertainty and providing data-based recommendations. Davenport et al. (2020) state that AI is expected to change both marketing strategies and customer behavior because it affects how firms interact with consumers and how marketing decisions are made. Recent studies further indicate that advances in generative AI, explainable AI, and large language models are expanding marketing capabilities by improving customer interactions, content generation, and strategic decision support while simultaneously increasing the need for responsible AI governance (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Davenport & Mittal, 2022; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020).

The interpretation of the literature suggests that AI improves decision-making at three levels. At the operational level, AI can automate routine activities such as chatbot responses, email scheduling, and product recommendations. At the tactical level, AI can help marketers optimize advertising budgets, select target groups, and evaluate campaign performance. At the strategic level, AI can support long-term decisions related to customer value, market positioning, and competitive advantage. Huang and Rust (2021) explain that AI can support marketing through mechanical intelligence for automation, thinking intelligence for analytical decisions, and feeling intelligence for understanding customer interactions and emotions.

4.4. Discussion of Ethical and Managerial Challenges

Although AI provides important benefits, the literature also identifies several risks. Puntoni et al. (2021) explain that consumers experience AI through data capture, classification, delegation, and social interaction, meaning that AI affects not only business efficiency but also consumer psychology and social experience.

This discussion shows that AI in marketing cannot be understood only as a technical instrument. It also creates ethical responsibilities for companies. If firms collect customer data without clear communication, use biased algorithms, or make automated decisions that customers do not understand, trust may decline. De Bruyn et al. (2020) also highlight that AI creates both opportunities and pitfalls in marketing, especially when algorithms are biased, difficult to explain, or guided by poorly defined objectives. Overall, recent literature suggests that organizations obtaining the greatest value from AI combine advanced

analytical capabilities with human expertise, organizational learning, and ethical governance rather than relying exclusively on automated decision-making (Davenport & Mittal, 2022; Rust, 2020).

4.5. Overall Discussion

Overall, the empirical interpretation of the reviewed literature indicates that AI enhances marketing performance by improving customer analytics, personalization, and decision-making. AI enables firms to better understand customers, predict future behavior, and design more effective marketing strategies. It also supports managers by providing faster and more accurate insights than traditional methods.

AI should not completely replace human judgment, especially in strategic and ethical decisions. Instead, it should be used as a decision-support tool that combines data analysis with managerial experience and ethical responsibility. Therefore, the main implication of this paper is that AI can strengthen marketing effectiveness only when it is applied in a transparent, fair, and customer-centered manner.

Conclusion

AI is significant driver of transformation in contemporary marketing, especially in the areas of customer analytics and managerial decision-making. As markets become increasingly digital and data-intensive, organizations are required to process large volumes of customer information in order to understand consumer behavior, respond to changing preferences, and develop more effective marketing strategies. The analysis presented in this paper shows that AI supports this process by enabling firms to identify patterns, predict customer actions, personalize communication, and optimize marketing decisions with greater accuracy and speed.

From a customer analytics perspective, AI strengthens the ability of firms to move beyond traditional descriptive analysis toward predictive and prescriptive approaches. Through machine learning, recommendation systems, natural language processing, and automated analytical tools, marketers can gain deeper insights into customer needs, purchase intentions, engagement behavior, and potential churn. These insights allow companies to design more targeted and customer-centered strategies.

By providing evidence-based recommendations, AI reduces uncertainty and assists managers in making more informed choices related to segmentation, targeting, personalization, campaign management, pricing, and customer relationship management. Rather, it should be viewed as a strategic decision-support tool that combines technological capability with managerial expertise, creativity, and ethical responsibility.

Artificial intelligence offers substantial advantages for marketing activities, yet its adoption is accompanied by several significant concerns. Challenges related to the protection of personal information, fairness of algorithmic outcomes, explainability of AI systems, consumer confidence, and ethical data management continue to receive considerable attention. When AI technologies are implemented without appropriate governance frameworks and human supervision, they may reduce customer trust and expose both organizations and consumers to potential risks.

Overall, artificial intelligence represents a valuable resource for strengthening marketing effectiveness through enhanced customer intelligence and improved managerial decision-making. By converting large volumes of customer data into actionable knowledge, AI enables organizations to develop more informed marketing strategies and optimize business performance. Nevertheless, the sustainability of AI-enabled marketing depends on the extent to which organizations apply these technologies responsibly, transparently, and in accordance with ethical principles. Future studies could further investigate how AI influences consumer trust, customer loyalty, organizational performance, and marketing outcomes across diverse industries and market environments.

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