

Article

# Research on the Effects of AIGC Advertisement on Prosumer Behavior

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**Abstract:** After OpenAI announced the GPT-3.5 model in November 2022, it opened up a new breakthrough in AI technology for content generation. Existing studies are mostly conducted in terms of traditional AI applications in various industries, and few studies have specifically explored the impact of AIGC on the emotional aspects of prosumer behavior. This study explores the difference in consumer behavioural intention between AIGC and human-designed advertisements. A total of 3 experiments were conducted to obtain data from 550 subjects. The results of the study show that ① consumer behavioural intention is higher when consumers see product advertisements generated by AI. ② Emotional attitudes mediate the effect of AI-generated advertisements on intention to produce and consume. ③ Prosumer' capability to regulate emotions mediates the effect of AI-generated advertisements on consumer-producing behavioural intentions. The main innovation of this study lies in the research perspective, comparing AIGC materials with artificially designed materials, which expands the existing research on production and consumption decision-making, and the use of Midjourney to design the experimental materials, which is an extension of the application of academic research tools. Practically the results of the study can provide companies with suggestions for marketing and emotional communication.

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence Generation Content(AIGC); advertising; emotion; prosumer behavior; prosumer capability

## 1. Introduction

The rapid development of AI provides a lot of ideas for advertising and marketing, and the importance of emotional value in the field of marketing is becoming more and more prominent. when choosing products, consumers pay more and more attention to whether the emotional value and brand value carried by the products are compatible with their own emotional demands and life philosophy. AIGC technology promotes the transformation of the service value to emotional value. In the era of information explosion, people's demand for services is not only limited to functionality and practicality, but also pursues personalisation and emotional experience. AIGC technology is able to provide personalised and emotional services, and consumers' emotional attitudes towards AIGC are also complex and variable. This paper takes the social media platform as the context and generative AI advertisements as the research content, based on the previous research on social e-commerce and AIGC behavioural intention, we comprehensively use the literature research method and experimental method to explore how generative AI advertisements, as a new form, affect AIGC behavioural intention under the combined influence of emotions and AIGC ability. We analyse whether emotion plays a mediating effect? Does emotion play a mediating effect and does consumer ability play a moderating effect?

This paper has both theoretical and practical significance. In terms of theoretical significance, when generative AI is applied to marketing, it will face a more complex and rich environment, how to take advantage of the emerging AI technology to release creativity to further expand the theoretical research on consumer behaviour and further guide

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the practice is an issue that deserves the attention of the academic community. In terms of practical significance, the attitudes of consumers towards generative AI products are still in a state of flux, and this study is able to provide social media platforms and brands with decision-making suggestions for generative AI advertising and marketing, and to help social media platforms and brands make more effective use of AIGC advertisements.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. AIGC Research

AIGC is a technology that requires collaboration between humans and AI. Some scholars have found that enterprise performance can be significantly improved when people and AI work together (Wilson and Daugherty, 2018) [1]. Wu Xiaolong et al. (2022) [2] based on the AI depth application of four industries: gaming, security, finance and advertising, found that when the scene is determined to use AI-style learning, people can transform their self-experience into an AI analysis model, which can be used to improve efficiency, and when the scene is uncertain, the AI carries out unsupervised modelling to help human exploratory learning, and the AI is the 'in-scene expert AI is an 'in-scene expert' and 'out-of-scene expert'.

Current research has analysed the instrumental role of Artificial Intelligence (AI), pointing out that AI, as a learning aid, can help companies accelerate learning and improve learning outcomes (Grover et al., 2018; Yang Guang and Hou Yu, 2020) [3,4]. Meanwhile, there are also studies that emphasise the cognitive function of AI, which can correct human cognitive biases and uncover and create new knowledge from data (Haefner et al., 2021) [5]. As a result, with the accumulation of data and increased computational power, AI is emerging as a learning participant within organisations that interacts with human learning and is capable of producing knowledge outcomes that are difficult to achieve with human-centred learning models. (Kellogg et al., 2020) [6].

### 2.2. Prosumption Research

Toffler (1980) pointed out that the term production and consumption (prosumption) is a synonym of production and consumption, referring to an economic activity that combines production and consumption into one. In this paper, endorsing the classic definition while expanding it with the context of the times, it is argued that in the social media scenario, production and consumption behaviours include consumer behaviours such as liking, commenting, re-tweeting and favouriting on social platforms, as well as purchasing of goods through social platforms.

Lambrecht and Tucker (2013) [7] conducted a field experiment through an online travel company to investigate how dynamically targeted advertising compares to generic brand advertising in terms of effectiveness. The findings suggest that when evaluating how best to reach consumers through advertising, managers should be aware of the multi-stage nature of the consumer decision-making process and vary the content of advertisements at these stages. A study by Bleier and Eisenbeiss (2015) [8] explored the impact of online ad personalisation on consumer behaviour and found that the level of trust consumers have in e-commerce plays a moderating role, with retailers with higher levels of trust being able to increase the perceived usefulness of advertisements through a combination of high personalisation depth and narrow personalisation breadth. Batra and Keller (2016) [9] proposed a model for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of integrated marketing communication programmes based on a deeper understanding of the consumer decision-making process and consumer processing of communication messages: a 'bottom-up' communication matching model and a "top-down" communication optimisation model.

### 2.3. Research on Emotions

Psychologists Mehrabian and Russell [10] proposed in 1974 that emotions consist of pleasure associated with happiness, satisfaction, and fulfilment, motivation associated with being stimulated, arousal, and arousal, and dominance associated with control, importance, and autonomy, i.e., the three-dimensional affective model (P-A-D). Sensory variables in the environment, the amount of information in the atmosphere, and the individual's emotional experience all influence his or her emotional response to the environment and ultimately elicit a convergent or avoidance response from the individual.

Studies using emotions have focused on consumers' emotional responses to advertisements and the mediating role of emotions on consumer satisfaction. Many of these researchers have used whether or not they like an advert to measure emotion and have suggested that there is a link between emotion and cognition. There are two schools of thought, the first is the emotion-cognition model (Zajonc & Markus, 1982) [11], where the emotional process begins when some information, object, or event triggers a cognitive appraisal, and cognition is generated by beliefs and shaped by personal values. Izard, Kagan, and Zajonc (1984) [12] hypothesise that emotions occur without prior cognitive processes; emotions can arise through biological, sensory, or cognitive events. Cognitive experiences are not necessarily part of the emotional process; emotional experiences are viewed as perceptions of having an emotion. The second is the cognitive-emotional model (Lazarus, 1991) [13], which assumes that cognition is a necessary but not sufficient condition for triggering emotions. External and internal cues must be evaluated in the light of one's own experiences and goals. Chebat and Michon (2003) [14] validated this view in a retail setting when observing the effects of environmental odours on mood and cognition.

## 3. Hypotheses Development

### 3.1. The Impact of AI-Generated Advertisements on Production and Consumption Behavioural Intentions

With the development of digital media and the introduction of technologies such as artificial intelligence, the outreach of advertising continues to expand. AI scenario-based marketing has become one of the new hotspots in advertising academic research. Scholars in the field of past advertising research have explored the influence of visual factors such as advertisement colour, structure, and the way of scene presentation on brand expression [15-17]. Previous research (2012) [18] suggests that the delivery of advertising messages as perceived by the consumer can have a high impact on the effectiveness of brand advertising, and that the impact of traditional advertising is diminishing as the media and advertising format landscape continues to change. New ad formats and innovations are more capable of creating consumer identification with ads.

Combining previous research and the objectives of this paper, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Consumption-producing behavioural intention is higher when consumers see product advertisements generated by AI compared to human-designed product advertisements.

### 3.2. The Mediating Role of Emotions

There have been many studies proving that emotions can have an effect on production and consumption behaviours. For example, Zheng Zhiying et al. (2020) [19] proved through rooted research and empirical analysis of questionnaires that emotions can have a positive impact on production and consumption behaviours.

Based on the research context of this paper, the following hypotheses are introduced:

H2: Emotional attitudes mediate the effect of AI-generated advertisements on consumer-producing intentions, and AI-generated advertisements generate higher emotional attitudes and, in turn, higher consumer-producing intentions in consumers compared to human-designed advertisements.

### 3.3. The Moderating Role of Consumer Competence

Early scholars have investigated the impact of consumer competence on consumer behaviour. Peng et al. (2011) [20] showed that consumer expertise moderates the impact of online review value through a 2\*2 experimental design: the difference in the impact of negative versus positive reviews was greater for consumers with low levels of expertise than for those with high levels of expertise.

This paper proposes the hypothesis of consumer-producing ability moderation:

H3: Consumer-producer ability moderates the impact of AI-generated ads on consumer-producer intention, and the impact of AI-generated ads on consumer-producer intention is more significant among consumers with higher consumer-producer ability.

H4: Consumer-producer competence moderates the mediating role of emotion in the effect of AI-generated advertisements on the intention to produce and consume behaviour.

## 4. Method

### 4.1. Conceptual model

As shown in Figure 4-1, based on the literature collation of previous research results, this paper constructs a theoretical model with the subject of advertisement design (AI vs. artificial) as the independent variable, the intention of consumer-producing behaviour as the dependent variable, the emotional attitude as the mediator variable, and the ability of consumer-producers as the moderating variable, and puts forward four main research hypotheses.

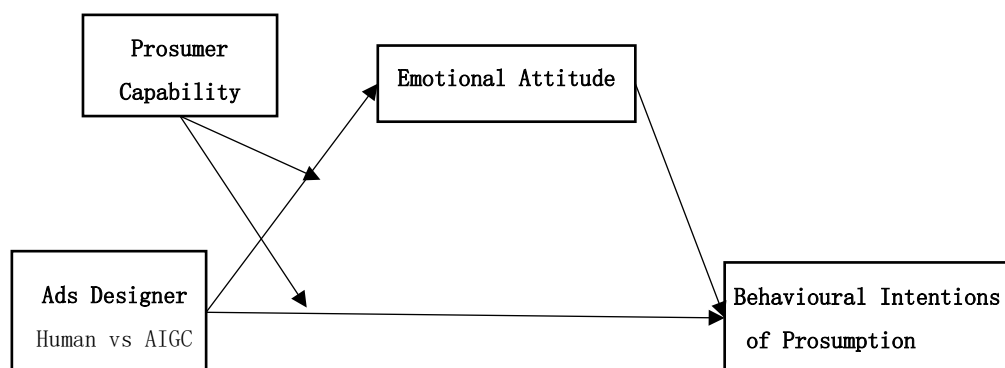


Figure 4-1. Research model.

### 4.2. Measurement and procedure

In this study, the Emotional PAD Scale developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) [10] was used, which includes nine question items. In order to measure the intention to produce and consume behaviours, a total of nine question items were designed based on previous research (Shen Lei, 2020) [19], which divided these behaviours into three dimensions, namely, information interaction and dissemination at the social level, information interaction and dissemination at the self level, and intention to purchase goods. A scale of consumer-producing capabilities was developed using Peng (2011) [20] and others, and a total of five items were designed. All items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). In addition, four basic information about the subjects' age, gender, education, and monthly income level were investigated.

The study consisted of three formal experiments in which subjects were first presented with an image of a simulated brand advertising a product on Weibo, with the copy informing the consumer that the image was either designed by AIGC or manually designed, to help subjects vicariously enter the scenario. Afterwards, subjects answered a

series of questions required for the experiment. The products advertised in the three experiments were laptop computers, duvets and laundry detergent.

In order to test the hypotheses of this paper, three formal experiments will be conducted, all of which adopt a one-way between-groups design. Experiment 1 explores the effects of different advertisement design subjects (AI vs. manual) on the production and consumption behavioural intention; Experiment 2 adds the mediating variable of emotion to explore its mediating role between AI advertisements and the production and consumption behavioural intention; and Experiment 3 explores the moderating role of the level of ability of the producers in the process of the effect of AI advertisements on the production and consumption behavioural intention. Experiment 3 investigates the moderating role of consumers' ability in the influence of AI advertisements on consumer behavioural intention.

Experiment 1 adopts an intergroup experimental design with two groups of AI-generated and human-designed advertisements. When the questionnaire was released, the subjects were randomly assigned to the two groups, and the design subjects were manipulated using the social media advertising scenario imagery method, and it was confirmed that the differences in the design subjects could be perceived by the consumers and elicit different production and consumption intentions. The experimental product used in this study is a laptop computer, and the fictional brand name is AICO for the purpose of restoring the social media scenario. A laptop advertisement image was downloaded from Apple's official microblogging site as the material for the artificial design group, and the design subject was generated by Midjourney (Prompt: a silver colour laptop advertisement, a silver colour laptop advertisement, a silver colour laptop advertisement, a silver colour laptop advertisement). marketing concept --no label, logo, words --ar 3:4 --v 6.1) laptop advertisement as the stimulus material for the AI-generated group. The advertisements in the AI-generated group were specially labelled 'This advertisement was generated by AI', and the advertisements in the human-designer group were specially labelled 'This advertisement was designed by human'.

In Experiment 1, subjects were asked to read a description of a social media scenario in order to manipulate their perceptions of the subject of the advertisement. Subjects in both groups read the same first half of the scenario description: 'You have always wanted an AICO laptop and have decided on the model you want to buy. Today, as usual, you swipe through Twitter and see a print advertisement for this laptop'. According to the pre-experimental results, in order to strengthen the subjects' perception of the design subject, the two groups added the sentence 'The advertisement was designed by AI' and 'The advertisement was designed by human beings' respectively. Next, the AI group and the human design group will be shown the following images separately and asked to view them for at least 5 seconds. After this, the subjects will be asked to answer the following question to measure their design subject perception: Based on the description of the above scenario, who designed this advert? (AI or human), only correct answers were valid data. Scale measurements and demographic characteristics were then administered.

The material design of Experiments 2 and 3 was similar to that of Experiment 1, but the products were followed by duvets and laundry detergent, respectively. The experimental procedure for Experiments 2 and 3 was the same as that of Experiment 1. The experimental procedure for Experiments 2 and 3 was the same as that of Experiment 1.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Experiment 1

A total of 150 valid data were recovered through Credamo for the Experiment 1. The results found that there is a significant difference between the consumer-producers' intention to produce and consume different advertisement design subjects ( $F=10.545$ ;  $p=0.001$ ), and the manual design mean (5.19) will be significantly lower than the AI-generated mean (5.58), and Hypothesis H1 is verified.

**Table 4-1.** Experiment 1 ANOVA.

	Subject of advert design (M ± SD)		F	p
	0.0(Human, n=81)	1.0(AIGC, n=69)		
Behavioural Intentions of Prosumption	5.192±0.776	5.585±0.690	10.545	0.001***

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent 1 per cent, 5 per cent and 10 per cent significance levels, respectively.

4.2. Experiment 2

A total of 200 valid data were recovered through Credamo in Experiment 2. Firstly, the main effect was verified, and it was found that there was a significant difference between the consumer-producers' intention to produce and consume different advertisement design subjects (F=14.829; p=0.000), and that the mean value of the manual design (4.871), would be significantly lower than that of the AI-generated one (5.382).H2 was again verified.

**Table 4-2.** Experiment 2 ANOVA.

	Subject of advert design (M ± SD)		F	p
	0.0(Human, n=87)	1.0(AIGC, n=113)		
Behavioural Intentions of Prosumption	4.871±0.854	5.382±0.986	14.829	0.000***

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent 1 per cent, 5 per cent and 10 per cent significance levels, respectively.

Next, Bootstrap method in SPSS was used to test the mediating role of emotions in the effect of AI-generated advertisements on the intention to produce and consume behaviour. The test concludes that emotions play a partial mediating role in the effect of AI-generated advertisements on intention to produce and consume, and that AI-generated advertisements allow consumers to develop higher emotional attitudes and, in turn, higher intention to produce and consume compared to human-designed advertisements. As shown in Table 4-3, hypothesis H2 is verified.

**Table 4-3.** Experiment 2 Emotional mediation effect.

Item	c	a	b	a*b (95% BootCI)	c'	Result
AIGC ADs=>Emotion=> Behavioural Intentions of Prosumption	0.504***	0.258***	1.025***	0.038 ~ 0.227	0.240***	Intermediary Effect

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* represent 1 per cent, 5 per cent and 10 per cent significance levels, respectively.

4.3. Experiment 3

A total of 200 valid data were recovered through Credamo for Experiment 3. In the case of Experiment 3 where the product setting is laundry detergent, the main effect is not significant and Hypothesis H1 is not re-validated. It may be because the price of laundry detergent product is low, and the AIGC advertising and marketing of low-priced FMCG products is not enough to influence consumers' product dissemination and purchasing decisions. The study further added moderating variables to test the moderating effect, which did not show significance, indicating that it does not have a moderating effect and hypothesis H3 is not valid.

Test H4. firstly, the mediating effect is analysed, using Bootstrap method in SPSS to test the mediating role of emotions in the influence of AI generated advertisements on the

production and consumption behavioural intention, the results of the analysis are shown in Table 4-4, and the hypothesis H2 is again verified.

**Table 4-4.** Experiment 3 Mediating Effect.

Item	c	a	b	a*b (95% BootCI)	c'	Result
AIGC ADs=>Emotion=> Behavioural Intentions of Prosumption	0.177	0.540***	1.199***	0.124 ~ 0.375	-0.471***	Masking Intermediary Effect

The moderating mediating effect (conditional indirect effect) was then analysed using SPSS model7 to analyse how well the moderating variable was mediated at different levels. As shown in Tables 4-5, the mediating effects were inconsistent at different levels, indicating a moderating mediating effect, and H4 was established.

**Table 4-5.** Experiment 3 Results of Conditional Indirect Effects.

Dependent Variable	Level	Standard value	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Behavioural Intentions of Prosumption	Low Level (-1SD)	4.642	0.190	0.202	-0.213	0.581
	Mean	5.437	0.553	0.156	0.251	0.859
	High Level (+1SD)	6.232	0.915	0.230	0.483	1.385

Note: BootLLCI refers to the lower limit of the 95 per cent interval for Bootstrap sampling, BootULCI refers to the upper limit of the 95 per cent interval for Bootstrap sampling, bootstrap type: percentile bootstrap method.

## 5. Discussion

This study utilises Credamo platform to collect a total of 550 valid data. Through three formal experiments, the impact of Artificial Intelligence Generated (AIGC) advertisements versus traditional manually designed advertisements on consumer behaviour was explored in depth. Overall, the material design of the experiments effectively helped subjects perceive the difference between AI-generated ads and manually-designed ads, and different experimental products were designed to strengthen the external validity of the study.

The results of Experiment 1 support Hypothesis H1, revealing that consumer-producers are more inclined to show behavioural intentions to produce and consume AI-generated advertisements when confronted with AIGC advertisements versus traditional manually-designed advertisements. This finding suggests that AIGC advertisements have strong spread and discussion in the current market environment. Particularly noteworthy is that consumers' purchase intention is significantly enhanced when their favourite brands are advertised using AIGC technology. This phenomenon emphasises the potential of AIGC advertising in brand communication.

The results of Experiment 2 again support Hypothesis 1, as well as Hypothesis 2. In the experimental product setting of down jackets, it was found that emotional attitudes mediated the effect of the advertising design subject on the intention to produce consumer behaviour. This finding suggests that the use of AIGC in brand advertisements can stimulate consumers' emotional responses, which in turn influence their decision-making. Emotional value is increasingly important in today's consumer decision-making process.

The results of the data analysis in Experiment 3 supported Hypothesis H4, but not Hypothesis H3, revealing the complexity of consumer-producing capabilities moderating the effect of AI-generated advertisements on consumer-producing behavioural intentions.

Although consumer-producer competence failed to directly modulate the effect of AI-generated advertisements on consumer-producing behavioural intention, it was found that consumer-producer competence did modulate the mediating role of emotion in the AI-generated advertisements' intention to produce consumer behaviour. This result was validated in the experimental scenario of laundry detergent, a low-value FMCG product. A possible explanation for the failure of H3 is that, for very low-priced products, there is little behavioural change between high- and low-producing consumers when confronted with AI ads. This suggests that emotions are an important drop-off point for reaching producers and consumers in the field of AI advertising.

In summary, this study not only validates the advantages of AIGC ads in terms of communicability and discussion, but also reveals the important role of emotions and consumer-producing capabilities in the consumer decision-making process. These findings provide valuable insights for brands when adopting AIGC technology for their advertising campaigns and point the way for future research on advertising strategy and consumer behaviour.

In terms of research outlook, in addition to emotion and consumer-producing ability variables, AI-based consumer-producing decision-making research is still in its infancy, and different socio-cultural backgrounds and consumers' personal traits, such as consumers' price sensitivity, subjective knowledge, income and consumption levels, may also have an impact on the results of this study, which can also be the focus of further research on the above issues in the future. In addition to AI-generated images, the product forms of AIGC include text, music, video, and AI digital people, etc., and further research can be conducted in the future to address different forms of AIGC.

The findings of this study can be targeted to give advice to enterprises in the process of using AIGC advertising and marketing to achieve the purpose of cost reduction and efficiency. On the B-side, industries centred on content production can take the lead in leveraging the development of AIGC technology to achieve their own cost reduction and efficiency purposes. These industries usually take content production as their core value, have a high degree of online presence, and have a strong demand for innovation and personalisation. On the C-end, the 'positive and open' and 'algorithm aversion' attitudes of consumers coexist, and 'human intelligence co-creation' requires higher innovation power, so enterprises need to strike a good balance. With the gradual popularisation of the technology, AIGC's innovative value, communication value and emotional value in the marketing field will become more and more prominent. At present, for many consumers, AIGC is still a new thing, and it brings its own traffic in marketing, so enterprises that keep a wait-and-see attitude can try it boldly. Emotions play an important role in consumer decision-making, and AIGC allows everyone to create images in their own language, so consumers have a strong emotional perception of AIGC, and companies should create a positive emotional experience through AIGC ads in order to promote consumers' behavioural intention to produce and consume.

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