Market Grooming

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Market Grooming: The Dark Side of AI Marketing

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About the Editors

Dr Sumesh Singh Dadwal has 23 years of experience in teaching, academic research, eLearning and educational quality management, associated with various UK universities. Currently, he is working as a Senior Lecturer in Strategy at London South Bank University, UK. Previously Dr Dadwal has worked at a number of British Universities such as the Northumbria University, University of Glyndwr, UWL, Birkbeck College, University of London, University of Plymouth, University of Falmouth, Ulster University, University of Roehampton, and Buckinghamshire New University, UK. He has previously worked as a Project Engineer in construction projects and Quality Annalist in the supply chain. He has also been associated with QAA UK, the higher education quality assurance agency of the United Kingdom. Sumesh specialises in international strategies, technological strategy and business models, innovation and technology in marketing, digital marketing, entrepreneurship and business in emerging markets. He is an active researcher undertaking analysis in the service sector, promotional strategies in emerging markets, augmented reality marketing and consumer behaviour, utilising various qualitative and quantitative techniques. He has authored various research papers, recently edited two books, authored many book chapters in other edited books and has led research activities at various levels. His recent publications include many book chapters and journal articles, and he has edited several research books.

Professor Hamid Jahankhani gained his PhD from Queen Mary College, University of London. In 1999, he moved to the University of East London (UEL) and became the first Professor of Information Security and Cyber Criminology at the university in 2010. Professor Hamid has been working with Northumbria University London, UK since 2016. Hamid's principal research area for several years has been in the field of cybersecurity, information security and digital forensics. In partnership with the key industrial sectors, he has examined and established several innovative research projects that are of direct relevance to the needs of the UK and European information security, digital forensics industries, Critical National Infrastructure and law enforcement agencies. Professor Jahankhani is the Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Electronic Security and Digital Forensics*, www.inderscience.com/ijesdf, *International Journal of Electronic Democracy*, www.inderscience.com/ijed, both published by Inderscience, and the general Chair of the annual International Conference on Global Security, Safety and Sustainability (ICGS3). Hamid has edited and contributed to

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About the Contributors

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Richard Bowen has worked at some of the largest and fastest growing technology companies and start-ups, including Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook and Instacart. He now plies his trade at Chime after working at Robomart, a Silicon Valley startup, as Interim Chief Operating Officer and now board member. Richard is also an early-stage start-up advisor and mentor, investor, board member, research author and visiting lecturer, with over 15 years of industry diverse operations experience, with a balance of business experience and academia. Richard holds a first class with honours BA in Business and Management and is a doctoral

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Preface

AI, large language-based models (LLM), Internet of Things (IoT) and allied technologies have enabled machines to perform business activities that are normally performed by human beings (Ho & Chow, 2023; Werner et al., 2022). AI has become a crucial tool for enhancing corporate core competencies, steering towards agile corporate strategies and business models and understanding the challenges of internal (employee relationship management – ERM) and external customer relationship management (CRM) (Smith, 2018; Ventura, 2021). Technology and human interaction bring in a lot of opportunities and challenges in the management of the business in general and marketing in particular (Belanche et al., 2020; Dukes et al., 2020; Krafft et al., 2020). The use of technology also brings in issues related to trust, perceived risks and threats, ethical, security and social impacts, and so on (Chen et al., 2022). The most important is about misusing AI for market grooming and consumer grooming. The markets often stalk their consumers and slowly groom them by tracking, predicting, grooming and then selling the products of the services (Grogan, 2019). Studies have claimed that companies like Amazon could accurately predict that a particular woman is pregnant (even before those women knew it) (Grogan, 2019).

Using technologies, the markers send subliminal messages, neuromarketing, social constructive reasonings, cues and stimulus to the consumers and slowly and gradually condition consumers to 'do what marketers want them to do'. This is market and consumer grooming, where a consumer is almost a novice, has not given informed consent and doesn't know that they are making decisions based on what others are telling them and not based on what they shall do undependably. This can compromise consumer independence, freedom and democracy. Such tools if used in politics can mar the whole democratic process of countries and political systems. The book touches on consumers' sides of issues where the consumers might be manipulating AI platforms (deliberately seeing other sites and products, putting products in baskets. . .. and complaining about being misfolded and waiting for offers). This area is also being not researched yet (Ventura, 2021).

Market Grooming: The Dark Side of AI Marketing will be a paradigm shift project in the field of marketing. The book explores how marketing is executed to attract customers (where customers are free to make decisions) from an opposite paradigm, i.e. where the customers, markets and communities are groomed, socially conditioned, subliminally marketed and influenced to passably 'do what marketers want the consumers to do'. Such research work will have great

implications in minimising the negative consequences of AI and technology-enabled marketing to individuals, communities, societies, governments and so on. This will reinforce the idea of ethical–sustainable marketing in the era of Industry 5.0. It answers to lean back' experience of the stakeholders. The book will reinforce that Marketing 5.0 should be about technology for humanity and not the other way.

This book is a unique interdisciplinary project inculcating and integrating ideas of public policies, business and techno-entrepreneurs with those with a stream of technology. The book has inputs from fields of marketing, technologies, cybersecurity, AI, ChatGPT, ICT, IoT, big data analytics, etc. There is not much research in the areas of market grooming, and AI and new CRM models (Ledro et al., 2022; Smith, 2018), technology and new digital consumer behaviours and customer journey mapping (Ho & Chow, 2023) and lean back attitude (Darsi, 2022).

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Introduction

Audience

The book will also be a useful source for academics, researchers and technology-driven strategists and marketers to understand and apply the principles and the practices of artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), conversation services automation (chatbots) and allied technology-empowered strategies, new business models and AI, machine learning, digital marketing, AI-CRM models and associated personal, social, political–legal and ethical concerns in the marketing in the developed as well as in less developed countries. The book will also be of interest to regulators, law implementing agencies, professional bodies and IT technologists and consultants across sectors.

Key Features of the Book

Several books are written for marketers to exploit or use AI to their advantage. Almost no books exist which highlight the agendas and issues of market grooming by marketers. The book put forward explores and analyses a range of unethical practices in marketing such as grooming your customers using AI, neuro-marketing, subliminal marketing and customer stalking. Customers on the flywheel, navigating the dynamics of patient grooming on doctor–patient relationships, use ChatGPT in Marketing 5.0, AI shapes the hiring process through biased HR data, machine learning techniques to project customer behaviour, it also discusses areas on practices of ethical marketing, exploring AI frameworks of ethical marketing in the era of AI, ethical navigation paradigms in AI-driven marketing, the balance between personalisation and automation in human–AI interaction, AI in digital marketing and actions to improve the image of marketing.

Hence, it seems a unique research project with almost no competition or at least no direct competition, as this book focuses on a new paradigm of market grooming by marketers, a kind of negative side of marketing (how to avoid those negative personal, social, ethical and political legal impacts of AI in marketing) and will be interesting to a variety of stakeholders, regulations, marketing agencies, governments, consumers and so on. The book will explore a variety of interdisciplinary areas and will contribute chapters from authors from Europe

and Asia, so the book will be more valuable for the readers. This book explores and analyses the principles and practices of AI, the IoT, ChatGPT, conversation services automation (chatbots) and allied technology strategies and digital marketing.

Organisation of This Book

The book has explored the concept, model and practice of the dark side of digital technology in general and AI in particular and its use in grooming the customers and grooming the market. The book explores the strategic side as well as practices of marketing companies in grooming customers using technology, AI and concepts of customer stalking. Flywheel model, neuromarketing, subliminal marketing ethical and unethical marketing and so. The book is organised to first analyse the concept, practices and models of market grooming, followed by a positive application of AI and machine learning; there are also sections on ethical marketing in the era of marketing, and towards the end, the book develops some arguments for improving the image and practices of marketing.

The first chapter explores and analyses a range of unethical practices in marketing such as grooming customers using AI, neuromarketing, subliminal marketing and customer stalking, customers on the flywheel, and Chapter 2 is on AI-Driven Trading: Navigating the Complex Landscape of Market Manipulation. Chapter 3 illustrates the dynamics of patient grooming in doctor–patient relationships. Chapter 4 is about the application of ChatGPT in Marketing 5.0. Chapter 5 analyses how AI is shaping the hiring process through biased HR data.

The second section discusses areas of practices of ethical marketing. Chapter 6 analyses the use of machine learning techniques to project customer behaviour. Chapter 7 explores the AI frameworks of ethical marketing in the era of AI. Chapter 8 is about ethical navigation paradigms in AI-driven marketing. Chapter 9 debates creating a balance between personalisation and automation in human–AI interaction. Chapter 9 is about AI and ethical digital marketing.

The third section is about balancing AI and marketing. Chapter 10 explores the balance between personalisation and automation in human interaction. Chapters 11–13 discuss a range of actions to improve the image of marketing, practices of Chinese short video platforms to enhance user stickiness and grooming and neuromarketing.

Though each chapter on its own has independent standing and relevance, however, as a whole, the book flows from exploring the concept of marketing and thorough ethical paradigms and closes with a positive set of recommendations.

This book is organised into 13 chapters. A brief description of the chapters is given in the following sections.

Chapter 1 – Market Grooming: Grooming Customers Using Artificial Intelligence

This opening chapter sets the scene and builds the framework of the book and the concept of market modelling and the use of AI. *In the era of generative AI, big data analytics, business analytics and mega global digital corporations, the profession of marketing is at a crossroads between* 'Prosumer-Marketing' *and* 'Market Grooming'. 'Market Grooming' *is a one-sided, unethical process of conditioning or influencing, deceiving or persuading or manipulating and even exploiting customers by the marketing organisations, without customers' voluntary consent, permissions, awareness, etc. As the consumers have asymmetric access to information, asymmetric and lesser favourable levels of control, and lesser power in the process of exchange, as customers trust the marketers or are dependent on popular brands; the markers tend to exploit the situation. The process of market grooming has become easier due to the power of AI, generative AI, ChatGPT, TikToketing, machine learning and big data analytics leading to the development of sophisticated predictive models and persuasive models. This chapter explores and analyses a range of techniques in marketing such as permission marketing, Flywheel marketing, subliminal marketing, neuromarketing, cyberstalking ethical marketing, etc. in the era of AI. The arguments for high concerns pertaining to potential market grooming are supported by theories of ethics, theories of digital marketing and models of AI. The chapter concludes with some strategic recommendations.*

Chapter 2 – AI-Driven Trading: Navigating the Complex Landscape of Market Manipulation

Algorithmic trading has evolved beyond traditional methods by incorporating machine learning techniques to analyse extensive datasets. The integration of machine learning and ATS has helped in enhancing the decision-making process leading to more accurate predictions of market trends, risk assessments and optimal execution strategies. The opaque nature of artificial trading models can create challenges in understanding the decision-making process of these systems. This lack of clear understanding raises questions about accountability, and market participants lack transparency on whether movements are economic-driven or algorithmic trading strategies. The chapter explores the development of AI-driven trading and key characteristics of algorithmic trading systems. In conclusion, the integration of machine learning into capital markets represents a major shift in how investment decisions are made, risks are managed and how markets operate independent AI trading systems. Its increasing use highlights the need for careful ethical consideration, regulatory flexibility and ongoing monitoring.

Chapter 3 – The Dark Side of AI: Navigating the Dynamics of Patient Grooming on Doctor–Patient Relationships

The growth of AI-enabled marketing has led to motivating customers purchase goods and services where the customers are 'nurtured' or 'groomed' to make a purchase decision. Consumer grooming as the name suggests involves changing or influencing an individual's behaviour and decision-making abilities by repeated personalised messaging. We have entered an era where AI is driving marketing in almost all industries and influencing customer decision-making. The healthcare industry is quite a concern as it involves the health of the poor and vulnerable impacted by AI decision-making, also deeply affecting the conventional doctor–patient relationships. AI in healthcare marketing involves using marketing gimmicks by marketing organisations where individuals are targeted with individualised medical messaging, changing the trust dynamics between patients and doctors. The marketing gimmicks often impact the healthcare decision-making of the patients, leading to induced healthcare purchases through these marketing messages, rather on advisory of doctors or other healthcare professionals. As a result of this constant patient grooming or medical brainwashing, patients end up making a wrong decision regarding their healthcare. Therefore, it is required that stakeholders in the health ecosystem prioritise more transparency, authenticity and patient empowerment to mitigate the challenges of patient grooming in the healthcare sector. The establishment of more stringent controls on medical marketing techniques, the development of health literacy and the cultivation of open communication channels within the healthcare ecosystem are all necessary because of this. In the end, AI-driven marketing presents prospects for personalised healthcare experiences; yet its unregulated expansion raises substantial ethical and patient safety issues.

Chapter 4 – ChatGPT in Marketing 5.0: Gold Is Real or Just a Gold Plating

Organisations using advanced technology, like ChatGPT, for executing their marketing practices are proliferating, but such fast growth also comes with different adverse impacts of ChatGPT. This interaction of ChatGPT with the humanly implemented Marketing 5.0 approach complements the marketing effectiveness. However, while considering the brighter aspects of this techno-marketing integration, marketers should also keep its dark side in mind. Therefore, this chapter investigates the integration of AI-enabled ChatGPT into Marketing 5.0 practices. However, both the concepts under study are growing in terms of literature, and the research gap is even more extended when considering their associated views. Furthermore, significantly less literature is available emphasising the negative aspects of this advanced technology. This chapter bridges these gaps by reviewing the literature and presents the gold-plating effect of ChatGPT usage while implementing Marketing 5.0 practices. It also proposes a framework for showing the relationship between ChatGPT utilisation for practicing Marketing 5.0, depicting the dark side of this techno-marketing integration.

It also emphasised the need for conscious and learnt association between the concepts under study.

Chapter 5 – Unpacking the Double-Edged Sword: How Artificial Intelligence Shapes Hiring Process Through Biased HR Data

This chapter discusses and explores how AI has transformed the field of hiring, enabling employers to collect and analyse massive amounts of data to understand and predict the suitability of candidates. However, AI can also have subconscious effects on candidates' and employers' needs through biased data, which can stem from human biases, algorithmic errors or external factors. For example, Amazon scrapped an AI-based recruitment program that favoured male candidates over female candidates due to the historical patterns in the resumes it analysed. This chapter examines how AI can shape a candidate's needs through biased data from various sources and types and what are the consequences for a candidate's welfare and rights. We review the literature on AI applications in hiring, the origins and kinds of bias in AI systems and the potential risks and benefits for candidates. We also suggest some guidelines for reducing bias in AI and enabling candidates to make informed and ethical choices online. We argue that AI can be a double-edged sword for candidate's needs and that more research and regulation are required to ensure its fair and accountable use.

Chapter 6 – Leveraging Machine Learning Techniques to Project Customer Behaviour Through Predictive Analysis and Ethical Marketing

This research investigates the intricate dynamics of consumer behaviour and the transformative impact of predictive machine learning algorithms. Employing a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques, the study explores the application of unsupervised K-means clustering and supervised random forest algorithms. Through real-world case studies and data analysis, insights are gained into the predictive modelling of customer behaviour in diverse industries. Findings reveal the effectiveness of these techniques in segmenting customers based on income and spending behaviour, with a prediction accuracy of 84%. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of integrating qualitative insights to enrich understanding and validity. The study also critically explores the potential risks associated with unethical marketing that leads customers to purchase products without their voluntary and fully informed consent.

Chapter 7 – Towards Responsible AI: Exploring AI Frameworks, Ethical Dimensions and Regulations

The field of AI is advancing far more rapidly than the establishment of rules and regulations, which is causing certain fear. However, slowing down this progression to avoid an economic crisis is not an option because of open-source AI,

which facilitates faster development processes and collective contributions to codes and algorithms. Public policies, such as the 'European Union AI Act (EU AI)', 'Whitehouse AI' and the G7's 'Hiroshima Artificial Intelligence Process' (HAP), have already been drafted. Regulators need to adopt a dynamic approach given AI's rapid advancement, and they need to eventually strive for international harmonisation in their rules and regulations for better collaborations. The EU's AI Act is the 'world's first comprehensive law', and it focuses on five main pillars similar to other countries' drafts: ensuring AI usage is safe, transparent, traceable, non-discriminatory and environmentally friendly. They portray four risk categories against which citizens can file complaints: (1) unacceptable risk, (2) high risk, (3) generative AI, and (4) limited risk. The US AI policies include 'The Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights: Making Automated Systems Work for the American People' and the 'Executive Order on Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence'. This conceptual study extensively reviews the concept of AI and compares pioneering draft laws while providing recommendations on ethics and responsible AI.

Chapter 8 – Ethical Navigation Paradigms in AI-Driven Marketing: Insights and Perspectives

AI has several advantages for enhancing marketing strategies. It raises ethical problems about customer priority, market share consolidation and consumer manipulation. This study examines ethical issues from a modern viewpoint, using insights from AI and previous literature reviews. The implementation of AI in marketing may result in unanticipated ramifications, including the reinforcement of preexisting prejudices, infringement upon customer privacy, restriction of competitive forces and meddling with consumer conduct. This research seeks to enhance the industry by offering a contemporary viewpoint on the ethical issues related to AI utilisation in predictive marketing, based on insights from previous literature reviews in the field.

Chapter 9 – Artificial Intelligence in Digital Marketing: The Ethical Implications of Digital Influence on Markets and Consumer

This research, titled 'AI in Digital Marketing: The Ethical Implications of Digital Influence on Markets and Consumers', conducts a comprehensive examination of the nuanced role played by AI in shaping consumer behaviour and influencing decision-making processes. While the incorporation of AI in marketing offers commendable advantages, such as providing personalised content and optimising strategies to enhance customer experiences and market efficiency, it concurrently introduces ethical considerations. This study meticulously scrutinises the latent potential for market grooming, wherein AI subtly guides consumers towards decisions that may not align with their best interests. By delving into instances of data privacy breaches, algorithmic biases and the unintended consequences of hyper-personalisation, this research contributes substantively to the ongoing

discourse on the responsible utilisation of AI. The study underscores the imperative need for regulatory frameworks aimed at ensuring ethical practices in the dynamically shifting digital landscape. It endeavours to strike an equitable balance between the constructive contributions and potential pitfalls of AI in the realm of marketing. Through this research, we aim to shed light on the ethical dimensions associated with the digital manipulation of markets and consumers, providing insights that can inform industry practices, policymaking and public awareness.

Chapter 10 – Exploring the Balance Between Personalisation and Automation in Human–AI Interaction

This study investigates the intricate relationship between personalisation and automation in AI, focusing on their impact on human interactions. The purpose is to discern patterns significantly influencing modern society, using notable examples from e-commerce, social media and digital advertising. The research employs a multifaceted approach, drawing insights from real-world examples of AI implementation. Noteworthy instances include Amazon's use of AI algorithms for personalised product recommendations, Netflix's application of AI in content recommendations and Tesla's Full Self-Driving feature in autonomous vehicles. The findings reveal the dual nature of personalisation and automation. In e-commerce, personalised recommendations, such as those on Amazon, can lead to impulse buying and potential financial strain. Similarly, social media algorithms, like Facebook's echo chamber and advertising strategies, exemplified by Google's 'skippable' and 'non-skippable' ads, strategically influence user behaviour and decision-making. The research also highlights the success of Netflix's personalised content delivery and the potential safety challenges in Tesla's Full Self-Driving feature. The study underscores the importance of a balanced approach to personalisation and automation, especially in ethical considerations, user privacy and data security.

Chapter 11 – Improving the Image of Marketing: AI Has the Potential to Assist in Marketing Decisions and Change Perceptions

Marketing is sometimes viewed as manipulative and as enticing consumers to live beyond their means. AI-powered systems can change the image of the marketing discipline and improve the marketing decision-making process. This chapter argues that embedding AI in the marketing process can help to alleviate public and consumer concerns about the marketing discipline. AI has the potential to make the marketing process transparent, but this is dependent on trust and privacy variables. Openness about using AI in the customer experience and how it is applied will put marketing on an objective framework. However, marketing decisions will be a mix of data and information mediated by intuition, reasoning, experience and empathy and these are qualities that are associated with

marketers. AI customer experience requires decisions that are objective (person-alisation) and those that are empathy related.

Chapter 12 – Exploring the Practices of Chinese Short Video Platforms to Enhance User Stickiness and Grooming the Customers: A Case Study of DOUYIN China (TikTok)

The global popularity of short video platforms has surged with the rapid development of mobile internet and 5G technology. DOUYIN, among other platforms, has amassed a massive user base in China. This study presents a theoretical framework based on media dependency theory and user stickiness perspectives. It identifies three key factors that affect user stickiness: platform algorithms, content resources and user interaction. An interpretive philosophy and inductive qualitative approach were adopted to conduct an in-depth case study of DOUYIN. Thematic analysis of secondary data from various sources was used. The findings demonstrate DOUYIN's innovative approach to utilising advanced algorithms, diverse content and social interactions to enhance user engagement. DOUYIN utilises machine learning techniques to create user profiles and comprehend video content. It subsequently provides real-time personalised recommendations and optimises the algorithms based on user feedback. DOUYIN also incorporates PGC, UGC and PUGC generated content, supported by a creator incentive system. Moreover, DOUYIN enables interactions between users, creators and the platform through commenting, sharing and live streaming features.

Chapter 13 – Market Grooming: How Neuromarketing Influences Consumers' Purchase Decisions?

Neuromarketers use methods like eye tracking, biometrics, brain imaging (fMRI and EEG) and eye tracking to try to understand how consumers make decisions, what grabs their attention and how they emotionally interact with companies, products and ads. Market grooming is the process of creating and manipulating the existing market towards a specific product, service or idea. It is the practice which helps the marketer to groom the product through various stages of marketing, be it market research, product development, advertising campaigns or creating favourable conditions for the product, all practices are performed to groom the market for a specific product; when it is combined with neuromarketing, it becomes a perfect blend for the success of the product in the actual market. The study concludes that market grooming along with neuromarketing can present a significant potential for enhancing the understanding of consumer decision behaviour by increasing the validity and precision of assessing customer responses to marketing activities.