

Intelligent Ascension: How Artificial Intelligence is Reshaping the Underlying Logic and Future Ecosystem of Marketing

Jinnuo Wang

Centaurus Brand Management (Shanghai) Co., Ltd. Beijing Branch, 100123, China

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, when we open any shopping app, the recommended products on the homepage often precisely match our unspoken needs; when we browse social media, advertisements seem to understand our current mood; and when we inquire with customer service late at night, an instantly replying intelligent assistant provides accurate and thoughtful answers. These are no longer scenes from science fiction movies but the daily reality unfolding as artificial intelligence (AI) permeates the entire field of marketing. Traditional marketing's "4P" theory (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) reveals its limitations in the digital age—it is based on information asymmetry between businesses and consumers, assuming that companies can influence the market by controlling these elements. However, the maturation of AI and big data technologies is fundamentally subverting this logic: information asymmetry is dissolving, and consumers are transforming from passive recipients into active participants with sufficient information and choices. This is not merely an upgrade of tools but a comprehensive revolution encompassing mindset, organizational structure, and value creation.

KEYWORDS

Digital Transformation; Marketing Management; Big Data Technology; Artificial Intelligence; E-commerce; Consumer Behavior; Precision Marketing; Digitalization Construction

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional marketing follows the classic "purchase funnel" model: Awareness, Interest, Consideration, Purchase, and Loyalty. This linear and unidirectional model assumes that consumers progress along a predetermined path, with businesses tasked to "push" them at each stage. However, in the digital environment, consumer decision-making paths have become nonlinear, cyclical, and highly personalized [3]. A consumer might be "inspired" by user-generated content on social media, promptly conduct price comparisons, watch unboxing videos, read professional reviews, complete a purchase during a live stream, and then return to social media to share their experience—all within hours and across multiple platforms.

The underlying logic of AI-driven marketing is shifting from a "funnel" to a "ripple" model. Each consumer touchpoint resembles a stone cast into water, generating ripple effects. The role of AI lies in: first, predicting the optimal point of impact (accurately identifying high-potential users); second, controlling the path and intensity of ripple diffusion (optimizing content distribution strategies); and third, sensing interference and resonance between different ripples (cross-channel synergy and ecological integration). The core of this "ripple ecology" is dynamic real-time response, rather than static predefined pathways. This aligns with the connotation of digital transformation proposed by scholars such as Liu Wenfeng, which emphasizes a shift from "static management" to "dynamic management" [1].

For instance, a cosmetics brand might use AI analysis to discover that a new product has sparked unexpectedly positive discussions within a specific niche (e.g., cosplay enthusiasts). Instead of rigidly adhering to the original mass-market promotion plan, the AI system would immediately adjust its strategy: automatically generate secondary content that aligns with the discourse of this niche, identify KOCs (Key Opinion Consumers) in this vertical field for collaboration, and potentially create temporary thematic hashtag pages on e-commerce platforms. Decisions are based on real-time data flows rather than quarterly marketing plans, reflecting the "real-time responsiveness" characteristic of digital transformation [1].

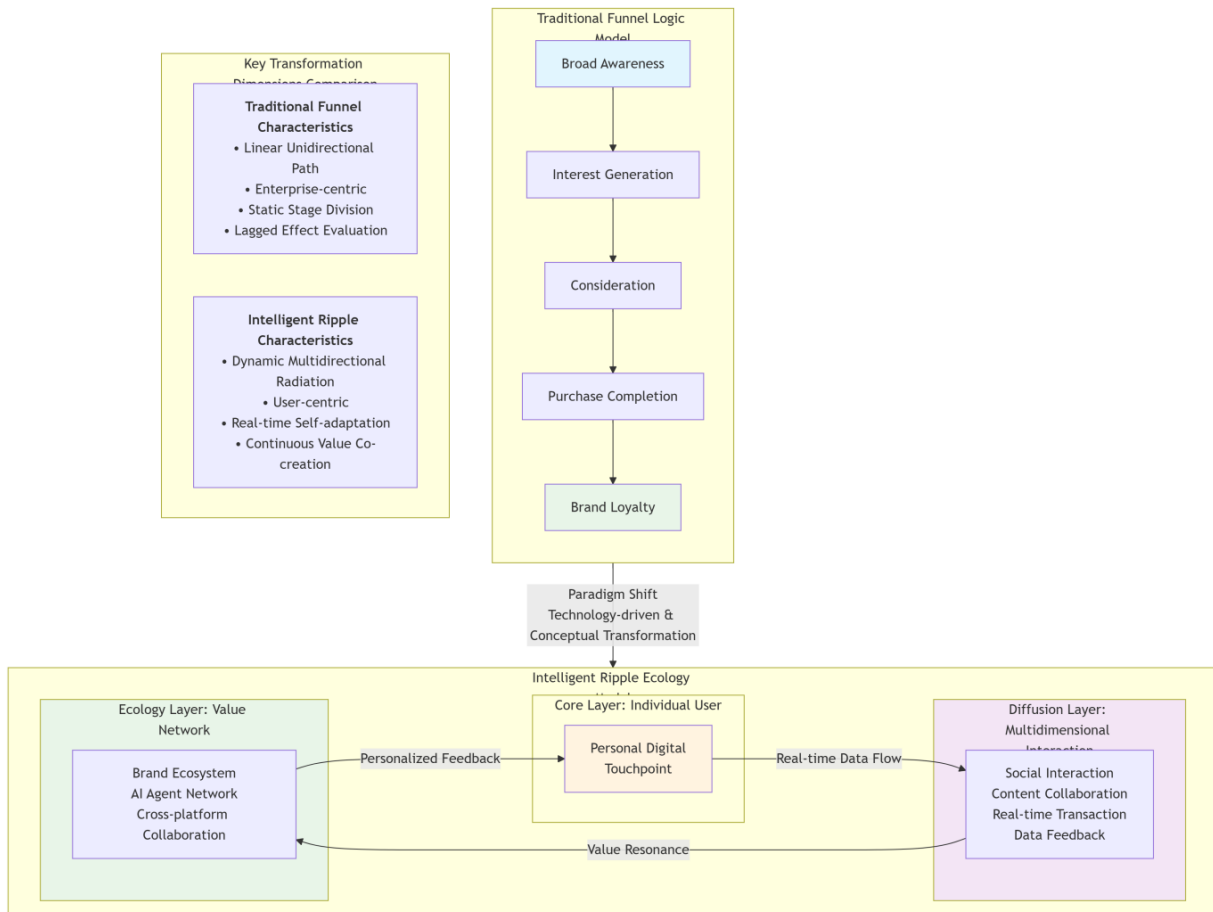


Figure 1. Marketing Paradigm Evolution: From "Funnel Logic" to "Ripple Ecology"

2. VALUE RECONSTRUCTION: FROM "TRAFFIC HARVESTING" TO "RELATIONSHIP ASSET MANAGEMENT"

Amid the plateauing of traffic dividends, the core concern of marketing has shifted from "how to acquire more traffic" to "how to maximize the long-term value of existing traffic" [4]. Artificial intelligence compels enterprises to redefine the value anchor of marketing: transitioning from the "traffic harvesting mindset" focused on short-term conversion rates to the "relationship asset management mindset" dedicated to nurturing long-term customer value.

2.1. Value Discovery: From Group Profiling to Individual Dynamic Intent Recognition

Traditional user profiles are static collections of labels based on past behaviors (e.g., "female, aged 25–30, living in a first-tier city, interested in luxury goods"). In contrast, AI-driven dynamic intent recognition leverages real-time behavioral sequences, contextual analysis, and affective computing to predict an individual consumer's specific needs and psychological state at a given moment. This

goes beyond understanding "what she likes" to discerning "what she might need now and why" [5]. For instance, by analyzing a user's recent frequent searches for "small apartment renovation" and "space-saving furniture," combined with browsing dwell time and content interaction sentiment, the system can infer that the user has likely recently rented a small apartment and is in a phase of strong "space optimization" demand, rather than being merely a casual "home décor enthusiast." Marketing messages tailored accordingly achieve incomparable relevance and persuasive power. This aligns with Yan Zhi's proposition that AI integrates multi-source heterogeneous data to construct dynamic customer profiles, shifting demand prediction from static to real-time perception [5].

2.2. Value Creation: From One-Way Communication to Collaborative Content Generation

The dilemma of content marketing lies in its high costs, slow output, and difficulty in achieving scalable personalization. The breakthrough of AIGC (AI-Generated Content) is deconstructing "content creation" itself. In the future, a brand's content assets will not be standalone videos or articles but modular "content gene pools": core brand narrative elements, visual style components, compliant language templates, and cultural symbol databases for various user segments. The role of AI is to rapidly combine and derive infinitely personalized content variations from these gene pools based on real-time user intent. The role of human marketers evolves from content producers to "content curators" and "gene pool designers," responsible for setting rules, infusing soul, and calibrating tone [6]. This enables "one-to-one" communication with unprecedented granularity. As exemplified by JD.com's Yanci platform, its AI tool matrix achieves automated generation and efficient scaling of marketing content [1].

2.3. Value Delivery: From Transactional Touchpoint Service to Full-Journey Intelligent Companionship

Traditional customer service is reactive, occurring at "transactional touchpoints" when consumers encounter issues and actively seek assistance. AI enables service to become proactive and pervasive, achieving "full-journey intelligent companionship"[5]. For example, after a user purchases a complex appliance, AI can proactively push personalized usage tutorial videos and maintenance reminders based on usage data (e.g., frequency of use, commonly employed functions), and even proactively inquire about potential issues when anomalies arise (e.g., a sudden increase in energy consumption). Ahead of the repurchase cycle for durable goods, intelligent systems can combine product upgrade information with detected changes in the user's life stage (e.g., identifying new family members through social media context analysis) to offer considerate renewal suggestions. The boundary between marketing and service dissolves entirely, with every interaction deepening relationships and creating value. This customer-centric operation embodies the strategic shift from "function-oriented" to "customer-oriented" emphasized by Dong Weina [2].

3. ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION: FROM "FUNCTIONAL SILOS" TO "INTELLIGENT CELLULAR ORGANISMS"

The most profound resistance to the intelligent transformation of marketing often originates from within the organization itself. Traditional departments—such as marketing, sales, IT, and data—operate in isolated "silos," resulting in high coordination costs and slow response times [2]. For AI to realize its full potential, it necessitates a corresponding evolution in organizational structure. The marketing organization of the future may evolve toward an "intelligent cellular organism" model.

In this model, the frontline consists of highly autonomous "agile task teams." Each team is organized around a specific user segment, product line, or market objective and is equipped with a standard "human-machine collaboration interface." This interface is not merely a software tool but a

comprehensive platform that integrates AI capabilities such as data insights, content generation, strategy simulation, and performance forecasting. Team leaders function more as "commanders," issuing strategic directives to the AI system (e.g., "Increase the average order value of Generation Z users this quarter"). The AI then generates multiple tactical pathways and resource requirement plans. After the team evaluates, selects, and fine-tunes these options, the AI coordinates resources from various middle and backend units for rapid execution. This resembles the future scenario of enterprise multi-agent collaborative work demonstrated by AI [7].

The middle platform serves as a robust "capability accumulation and empowerment hub." It is no longer a control-oriented department but an AI-driven "capability factory" and "data nexus." It continuously learns from all frontline tasks, converting effective strategies, content, and user insights into reusable models and modules that feed back into the frontline. Simultaneously, through resource scheduling algorithms, it dynamically allocates budgets, traffic, and technical support to each task team. This aligns with the principles of building a "unified data middle platform" and an "integrated closed-loop system" within a data-driven framework [2].

The backend forms a solid "ethical and compliance foundation." As the weight of AI-driven decision-making increases, ensuring algorithmic fairness, transparency, and compliance in data usage becomes the organization's lifeline [2, 8]. The backend must establish mechanisms for AI ethics review, data security firewalls, and algorithmic audit processes to ensure that the entire "cellular organism" does not derail while pursuing innovation at full speed.

This "intelligent cellular organism" organization achieves a unification of scale and agility: it combines the resource and data advantages of a large corporation with the rapid responsiveness to market changes characteristic of a small team. This is precisely the objective of digital transformation in driving the restructuring of marketing organizations toward flatter, more networked structures [1].

Table 1. Model Core Components Description of Intelligent Cellular Organism Marketing Organization

Core Components	Core Functions
Frontline - Agile Task Cells	Rapid market opportunity identification and response Deep user operation and relationship management Business innovation experimentation and validation
Human-AI Collaboration Hub	Intelligent task allocation and scheduling Dynamic resource coordination and optimization Knowledge graph construction and sharing
Middle Platform - AI Capability Factory	Deep data insights and prediction Intelligent content generation and optimization Strategy simulation and performance prediction
Unified Data Hub	Omnichannel data integration and governance Continuous model training and optimization Real-time data synchronization and distribution
Backend - Ethics & Compliance Foundation	Algorithm fairness review and monitoring Data security and privacy protection Compliance auditing and reporting

4. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES: MULTI-AGENT COLLABORATION AND THE "DE-PLATFORMED" MARKETING ECOSYSTEM

Currently, we are in the "instrumentalization" stage of AI-driven marketing, where AI serves as a tool to enhance human capabilities. However, the prelude to the next stage is already unfolding: the era of "Multi-Agent" collaboration. In this stage, AI will gradually evolve from a "tool" into autonomous "digital actors" capable of planning, negotiating, and executing tasks independently [7].

4.1. The "Personal Digital Twin" on the Consumer End

Every consumer may possess a highly personalized AI agent that deeply understands its owner’s preferences, values, financial situation, and schedule. This agent will represent its owner in negotiations and transactions with merchants’ marketing agents, logistics agents, and financial service agents. Shopping will no longer be about browsing and clicking but about issuing demand-based instructions to one’s own AI agent (e.g., "Plan a short trip for me next weekend with a budget of 3,000 yuan"). Through complex negotiations and combinations among multiple AIs, the optimal solution will be presented [7]. This will fundamentally challenge existing intermediary models such as e-commerce platforms and price comparison websites, pushing marketing toward a more "de-platformed," point-to-point service paradigm.

4.2. Automated Collaboration in the "Value Network" on the Industry End

Enterprises’ marketing agents will be deeply interconnected with supply chain agents, production and R&D agents, and partner agents. When a marketing agent predicts a product’s imminent popularity based on real-time market data, it can automatically send production capacity adjustment suggestions to the production agent, alert the supply chain agent about critical raw material demands, and synchronize promotional strategies and inventory information with channel partners’ agents. Marketing thus becomes the "super-sensing system" and "dispatch hub" driving real-time collaboration across the entire value chain. This extends Yan Zhi’s vision of "deepening cross-border ecosystem integration to build an AI-driven marketing value network" [5].

4.3. The "Emergent Evolution" of Creativity

Through the collaboration of multiple specialized AI agents, marketing creativity may no longer originate from flashes of human genius but rather from "emergence" within complex systems. For example, an AI responsible for cultural trend scanning, another for neuroscience and emotional analysis, and a third for visual art generation could, through repeated simulation, debate, and combination, produce disruptive creative concepts that transcend the cognitive frameworks of any single human or AI. The human role will increasingly shift to setting the "initial conditions" and "selection pressures" for creative evolution.

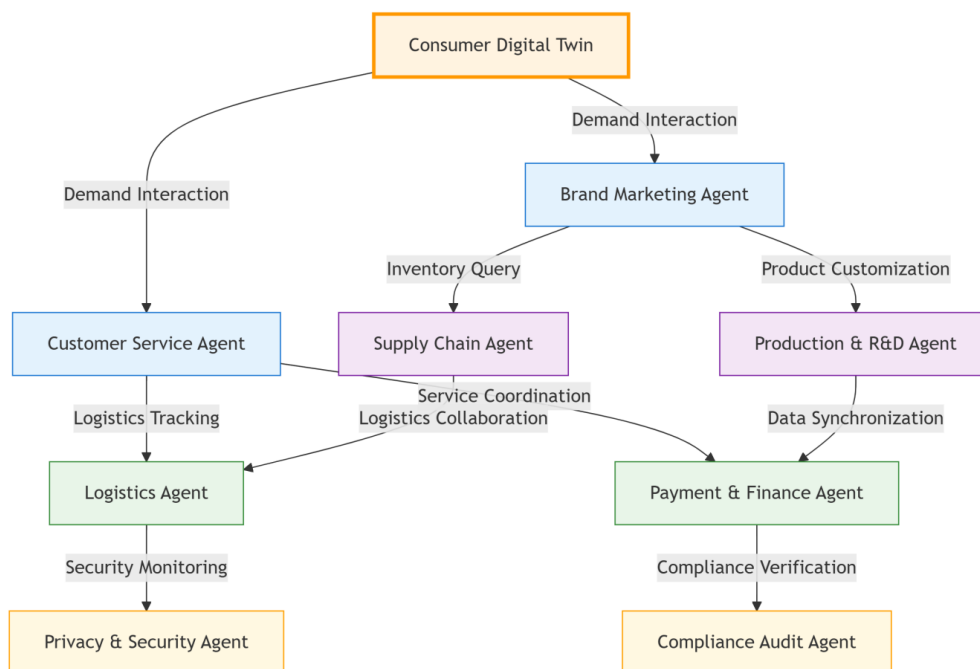


Figure 2. Multi-Agent Marketing Ecosystem Collaboration Network

5. CRITICAL REFLECTION: REBUILDING THE TEMPLE OF HUMANITY AND TRUST BESIDE THE CATHEDRAL OF EFFICIENCY

While envisioning the boundless possibilities of AI-driven marketing, we must maintain a sober and reflective perspective. Technology is a double-edged sword, and the excessive pursuit of efficiency may lead us into three profound pitfalls:

The first is the "Personalization Cage" [8]. When algorithms become overly precise in feeding us content and products we prefer, our opportunities to encounter heterogeneous information and serendipity are significantly reduced. Our cognitive horizons may continually narrow, trapping us in "information cocoons" and "consumption echo chambers" constructed by our own preferences. The greater test of marketing wisdom lies in how brands utilize AI not to endlessly cater to users but to respectfully "broaden" their perspectives, guiding them to explore the unknown and the extraordinary.

The second is "Affective Computing and the Erosion of Humanity." When AI becomes capable of precisely analyzing our emotions and delivering the most effective responses, such interactions fundamentally operate as an advanced "stimulus-response" mechanism. Over time, will we grow accustomed to and even expect such "perfect" yet emotionally sterile relationships? Will the genuine emotional bonds between brands and users—forged through shared struggles, unexpected joys, and authentic imperfections—gradually wither away? Marketing must, while leveraging affective computing, thoughtfully design "white space" and "unexpected moments" to preserve room for the authentic expression of human nature.

The third is the "Algorithmic Black Box and Trust Crisis" [2, 8]. As marketing decisions increasingly rely on complex algorithms that are difficult to interpret, questions arise in consumers' minds about their fairness, potential hidden biases, and how data is being used. Establishing a "Trustworthy AI" framework, enhancing algorithmic transparency (even to a limited extent), and empowering users with full control over their data and the "right to opt-out" of algorithmic recommendations will serve as the cornerstone for brands building long-term trust [2, 8]. As Dong Weina points out, safeguarding data security and user trust is the essential foundation that enterprises must solidify [2].

"AI Marketing 'Efficiency-Trust' Strategic Balance Framework"

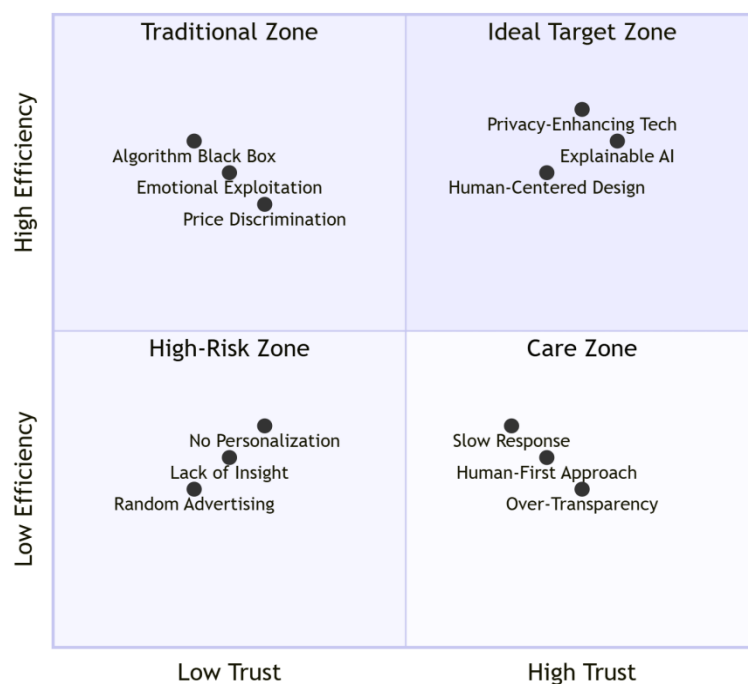


Figure 3. AI Marketing "Efficiency-Trust" Balance Framework

6. CONCLUSION

However, the oldest and most fundamental mission of marketing—to understand people, connect with people, and create value for people—has not only not become obsolete in the intelligent era but has instead become even more essential and urgent due to the extreme complexity of its technological implementation. The future winners will not be the enterprises with the most powerful algorithms or the largest volumes of data, but those capable of using technology as their vessel and humanity as their rudder, charting the optimal course between the boundless ocean of efficiency and the warm harbor of trust. Ultimately, artificial intelligence will integrate into the bloodstream of marketing like electricity, becoming an invisible background. What will forever shine in the foreground will be the profound and insightful understanding of human nature by brands, along with the unique meaning and warm experiences created based on this understanding—experiences that cannot be easily replicated by algorithms. Perhaps this is the ultimate revelation brought to us by this intelligent marketing revolution.

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