

THE POTENTIAL OF AI INFLUENCERS TO MODIFY THE CREATOR ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

The creator economy, sometimes referred to as the influencer economy, is a software-enabled economy that lets influencers and content producers get paid for their works. The advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has given social media content producers access to a plethora of novel tools that allow them to engage with their target audience more precisely, promptly, and efficiently. The emergence of AI influencers, or virtual influencers, who are computer-generated personas endorsing brands and products on social media, is one of the innovations that AI has brought to companies. Social media users are seeing less distinction between AI and genuine (human) influencers as AI technology advances. In general, human influencers have their own thoughts, feelings, and objectives, which might lead them to produce content in ways that may not always be consistent with a brand's mission. AI influences can be quickly corrected, and they only say and do what they are expressly trained to say and do. These virtual influencers are incapable of having second thoughts, making poor decisions, or becoming entangled in a scandal that can endanger a company's reputation. The fact that AI influencers are typically less expensive than their human counterparts with a comparable number of followers is also noteworthy.

Key words: Creator Economy, Artificial Intelligence (AI), AI Influencers, Social Media.

INTRODUCTION

Influencers on social media need to be well-known in their field, charming, and well-liked by other users of the Internet for others to follow their recommendations (Kwiatek et al., 2021). It's becoming common practice to employ artificial intelligence to locate influencers in the digital space who can meet the demands of businesses by matching their expertise and other attributes to those of the target market (Baltezarević et al., 2022).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming more sophisticated, which has made it possible to create lifelike objects for marketing and service purposes (Lou et al., 2022). Virtual or artificial intelligence (AI) influencers are digital personas who endorse products on social media platforms. These digital personas, which are frequently made using motion capture, artificial intelligence, and computer graphics, are intended to act online like real influencers. This gives marketers a distinctive method to interact with customers (Glover, 2024). These AI influencers are made with sophisticated

algorithms and are intended to interact with followers, distribute content, and even work with companies (Autogpt, 2024). The combination of synthetic and organic media will rise in the upcoming years. As virtual celebrities become more realistic, customers might occasionally be unable to tell AI personalities apart from real people. Because of this, CGI (computer-generated imagery) manipulation may become extremely potent for both good and bad purposes (Generativeai, 2024).

RESHAPING THE CREATOR ECONOMY WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

The highly prized market of content creators, or regular social media users who provide material for social media platforms, is known as the "creator economy." Actually, it's any type of content generation that is paid for. When we discuss the creator economy, we are referring to a network of individuals who produce media that is shared and viewed by friends, peers, and the media at large. Before, the only people interested in a certain specialty issue were members of a very small community. But thanks to these networks, specialized content now reaches a wider audience (Brzezicki, 2024). The result of media decentralization, which involves blurring the connection of information, is the creator economy. As a result of the latter, media businesses' text, video, photo, and other content are no longer theirs in the conventional sense. As a consequence, those who worked on the creation of this content will be able to get paid in new, unconventional ways (Geysler, 2021). The rapid expansion of the creator economy is a reflection of creators' capacity to incite social movements, establish trends, become popular overnight, and influence consumer behaviour. Marketers are starting to take notice of the significant possibility that creator content offers for advertising that yields measurable results (Iab, 2023). Goldman Sachs estimates that the creator economy might be valued \$480 billion by 2027. Influencers, YouTubers, podcasters, bloggers, artists, musicians, writers, and many more are included in the creator economy. These people make money from their online material and interactions with their audience (Savage, 2024).

Utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, many businesses today may lower operating costs, boost productivity and income, and enhance customer experience (Baltezarević, 2023). AI enables creators to swiftly and effectively produce original content. Also, it gives creators countless options for producing fresh stories, music, films, and images while saving them time, money, and effort during the creative process (Lightricks, 2023). AI has revolutionized the creator economy by upending traditional workflows and generating new opportunities and efficiency for both customers and producers. It becomes increasingly important for the entertainment ecosystem to consider the ethical, legal, and regulatory implications as AI technology develops and shapes the creator economy. It also becomes necessary to stay current on relevant legal issues, such as ownership of intellectual property, license rights, rights of publicity, and associated liability risks (Lalla et al., 2023).

It is increasingly obvious that generative AI will have an impact on content production that is comparable to, if not greater than, the revolution that photography brought about in the manner that we all produce. Having said that, it is anticipated that the creator economy will see an even greater and more pervasive boom as more and more creators and aspiring creators embrace the concept of generative AI. When combined, these ideas strengthen one another and bring to life what was before only in our dreams (Website-files, 2023). While using AI-powered technology to help with content creation is one thing, the technology is also exploring the boundaries of what constitutes acceptable AI-generated content. Artificial intelligence (AI) influencers, such as Milla Sofia, the 24-year-old virtual fashion model with over 97,000 Instagram followers, are already a reality and provide important legal and commercial challenges for the creator economy. This occurs at a time when marketing is still attempting to stay up to date with rules and industry standards pertaining to the use of transparency labels on filters (Hyder, 2023).

AI INFLUENCERS

Companies can more successfully shape consumers' opinions about their brands thanks to the digital environment, which facilitates faster and easier user communication (Baltezarević & Papakonstantinidis, 2023). Artificial Intelligence (AI) has given rise to a novel type of influence in the influencer marketing field known as the AI influence (Thomas & Fowler, 2021). The development of generative adversarial networks (GANs) lays the foundation for the idea of AI-generated influencers. This kind of machine learning model, then, is made up of two neural networks, a discriminator and a generator, that compete with one another to generate outputs that are more and more realistic. These artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms may create virtual characters that resemble real influencers in appearance and behavior by utilizing vast datasets of text, photos, and social media interactions (Autogpt, 2024).

Studies on artificial intelligence and machine learning suggest that AI influencers may have favorable outcomes. More specifically, a bot may be able to have substantial influence since the line separating human behavior from bot-like behavior is getting less and less noticeable (Ferrara et al., 2016). An independent AI influencer could use AI features, including speech recognition or machine learning, to better understand the demands of their audience. For example, the influencer could collect data from social media comments or videos that users share. An AI influencer with this kind of skill might be able to identify the characteristics of their followers and use that knowledge to tailor their interactions with them more effectively (Kim & Kim, 2021).

It is important to keep in mind that, in contrast to AI influencers, who are controlled by underlying algorithms that can be adjusted to the needs of the company, real influencers occasionally display bias and irrationality. Consequently, this gives brands more power and control over their sponsored content. As a result, virtual influencers are now a more affordable option for social media marketing than actual influencers (Thomas & Fowler, 2021). Thanks to AI influencers, a brand may rapidly create an infinite number of micro-targeted or even fully customized influencers. At the other end of the spectrum, influencer bots customized to each client may be deployed to target them all. These individualized influencers may take into account the preferences of their customers and even project an idealized self-image onto them through their hyper-personalised offers (Sands et al., 2022). With their full customizability, AI influencers can provide precise and brand-consistent messaging, ensuring a more dependable and consistent distribution channel for advertising. In contrast, human influencers may be swayed in their recommendation of a good or service by personal opinions or convictions (Feng et al., 2023). Naturally, the same rules that apply to human influencers also apply to campaigns including generative AI influencers. In particular, the majority of the problems with openness and trust have to do with fully disclosing AI's involvement in the influencer efforts. The usage of AI-generated content raises legal questions related to content ownership and safe content, that is, content that does not violate the copyrights or trademarks of any other content. Some regulatory organizations are even considering introducing more detailed regulations addressing the moral and legal issues related to the use of AI influencers in marketing and content creation as the usage of these tools in these fields grows (Topaiinfluencers, 2024).

At present, Dirt, a company responsible for the success of virtual influencer Lil Miquela, is valued at over \$125 million. Companies like SuperPlastic, Toonstar, and Shadows are also using virtual characters (Kasumovic, 2024). As of November 28, 2023, Lil Miquela, a 19-year-old robot from Los Angeles with over 2.7 million Instagram followers, is the most well-known virtual influencer. Lil Miquela is also active on other social media sites like Twitter, Discord, and TikTok. Other notable AI-generated influencers to consider are Shudu, Maya, and Blawko represent Christian Louboutin, Puma, and AliExpress, respectively (Chandni, 2022). AI influencers' operational dynamics are demonstrated by examples of them collaborating with brands. For example, a virtual influencer can be programmed to use specific hashtags, tag the brand, and wear digital representations of the newest collections from fashion brands. The secret to the distinction is in the background operations, where each post, comment, and the story is the product of meticulous team

planning and execution as opposed to haphazard human invention (Baltutan, 2024). AI influencers are shaped by the companies that work with them, thus there are less dangers associated with personal values and opinions that could damage a brand's reputation or image. Indeed, worldwide research indicates that about 50% of Instagram Influencers on average engaged in fraudulent activities. Working with an AI influencer would therefore remove the possibility of being connected to phony and maybe dangerous information (Dencheva, 2024).

CONCLUSION

The social media phenomena today stand for the creator economy, a brand-new and rapidly expanding economic sector. These days, it's typical for content producers to use a variety of tools to edit and monetize their content before posting it to social media. Artificial intelligence (AI) has taken the field to new heights and made a plethora of tools available that can produce material that is highly customized, even to the point of precisely matching the target market's preferences. One of the innovations that artificial intelligence (AI) has brought about is the potential for the development of AI (or virtual) influencers, who increasingly resemble human influencers on social media. In fact, consumers are finding it increasingly challenging to distinguish between AI influencers and real people. AI influencers have a history of gaining a sizable social media following and are frequently utilized to promote brands or products. One of the biggest benefits for companies using AI influencers is that they are controlled and cannot damage the company's reputation like human influencers can, with their biased and reckless social media activities. Artificial intelligence influencers are revolutionizing the online content creation, consumption, and marketing landscape. As a result of their widespread appeal, businesses are now utilizing AI influencers as an affordable form of advertising. Although many see AI influencers as a threat to human influencers, who could eventually be replaced, the prevailing opinion is that the virtual will only be used for certain advertisements and that the authenticity of real people will always be superior.

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