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AGENT-ORIENTED TRANSFORMATION OF MARKETING FUNCTIONS IN THE GENERATIVE AI ERA: INTRODUCING THE MARKETING AGENT LOOP

Merve Kadriye YURDABAK*

ABSTRACT

Generative artificial intelligence is increasingly embedded in marketing practice, extending beyond automation into strategic, creative, and relational domains. Although prior research highlights improvements in efficiency, personalization, and analytics, generative AI is still largely framed as a technological tool that enhances existing processes. Limited attention has been given to how AI agents reshape the internal structure of marketing functions and redistribute agency within organizations. This study develops the Marketing Agent Loop (MAL), a conceptual framework that reconceptualizes marketing as a recursive system of sensing, generating, interacting, and learning. Grounded in service-dominant logic, marketing capabilities theory, and digital transformation theory, the framework positions generative AI agents as functional participants operating under human oversight rather than as peripheral automation mechanisms. The study explains how agent participation reconfigures product development, pricing, promotion, customer relationship management, and marketing research through continuous feedback and adaptive coordination. The model represents not merely an acceleration of existing practices, but a structural transformation in how value is co-created, decisions are distributed, and capabilities evolve. By integrating established theoretical perspectives with an agent-oriented lens, this study contributes a systemic understanding of marketing transformation in the generative AI era and underscores the importance of strategic orchestration and ethical governance in human–AI collaboration.

Keywords: *Generative AI, Digital Marketing, Agent-Oriented Marketing, Digital Transformation, Human–AI Collaboration*

JEL Classification: *M15, M31, D83, O33*

ÜRETKEN YAPAY ZEKA ÇAĞINDA PAZARLAMA FONKSİYONLARININ AJAN ODAKLI DÖNÜŞÜMÜ: PAZARLAMA AJANI DÖNGÜSÜNÜN TANITILMASI

ÖZ

Üretken yapay zekâ, pazarlama uygulamalarına giderek daha fazla entegre olmakta ve otomasyonun ötesine geçerek stratejik, yaratıcı ve ilişkisel alanlara uzanmaktadır. Önceki çalışmalar verimlilik, kişiselleştirme ve analitik kapasitedeki artışlara dikkat çekmekle birlikte, üretken yapay zekâ çoğunlukla mevcut süreçleri iyileştiren bir teknolojik araç olarak ele alınmaktadır. Oysa yapay zekâ ajanlarının pazarlama işlevlerinin iç yapısını nasıl dönüştürdüğü ve örgütler içinde ajansın nasıl yeniden dağıtıldığı konusu sınırlı biçimde incelenmiştir. Bu çalışma, Pazarlama Ajan Döngüsü'nü (Marketing Agent Loop – MAL) geliştirerek pazarlamayı algılama, üretme, etkileşim ve öğrenme süreçlerinden oluşan döngüsel bir sistem olarak yeniden kavramsallaştırmaktadır. Hizmet-dominant mantık, pazarlama yetkinlikleri kuramı ve dijital dönüşüm teorisinden yararlanan çerçeve, üretken yapay zekâ ajanlarını çevresel otomasyon mekanizmaları olarak değil, insan gözetimi altında işleyen işlevsel katılımcılar olarak konumlandırmaktadır. Çalışma, ajan katılımının ürün geliştirme, fiyatlama, tutundurma, müşteri ilişkileri yönetimi ve pazarlama araştırması gibi temel pazarlama işlevlerini sürekli geri bildirim ve uyarlanabilir koordinasyon yoluyla nasıl yeniden yapılandırdığını açıklamaktadır. Önerilen model, mevcut uygulamaların yalnızca hızlandırılmasını değil; değer birliktelikte yaratılma biçiminin, karar süreçlerinin dağılımının ve örgütsel yetkinliklerin evriminin yapısal düzeyde dönüşümünü temsil etmektedir. Yerleşik kuramsal perspektifleri ajan odaklı bir bakış açısıyla bütünleştiren bu çalışma, üretken yapay zekâ çağında

* Assist. Prof, İstinye University, Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, Department of Management Information Systems, İstanbul, Türkiye. E-mail: merve.yurdabak@istinye.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0003-2149-5359

pazarlama dönüşümüne ilişkin sistematik bir anlayış sunmakta ve insan-yapay zekâ iş birliğinde stratejik orkestrasyon ile etik yönetişimin belirleyici önemini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Üretken Yapay Zekâ, Dijital Pazarlama, Ajan Odaklı Pazarlama, Dijital Dönüşüm, İnsan-Yapay Zekâ Etkileşimi

JEL Sınıflandırılması: M15, M31, D83, O33

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of generative artificial intelligence has begun to reshape the foundations of contemporary marketing. Large language models and agent-based systems are no longer confined to automating repetitive tasks; they increasingly participate in strategic analysis, creative production, and customer interaction (Davenport et al., 2020; Huang & Rust, 2021). Unlike earlier forms of marketing automation, generative AI systems demonstrate adaptive and interactive capabilities that allow them to interpret context, generate original outputs, and refine actions through feedback loops.

Recent scholarship acknowledges the expanding role of generative AI in areas such as personalization, content creation, and decision support (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Liu-Thompkins et al., 2022). More recent discussions further emphasize how generative systems are influencing marketing strategy and organizational processes (Chan & Choi, 2025; Grewal, 2025). However, much of this literature continues to conceptualize AI primarily as a performance-enhancing tool embedded within existing marketing structures. The dominant focus remains on efficiency gains, automation, and optimization outcomes rather than on structural transformation.

This perspective leaves an important gap. While research has documented how AI improves specific marketing functions, less attention has been given to how generative AI agents may reconfigure the structural logic of marketing itself. In particular, limited conceptual work has examined how agency is redistributed between human marketers and intelligent systems, and how this redistribution affects the coordination, integration, and governance of core marketing activities. As generative agents increasingly participate in sensing market signals, generating strategic outputs, interacting with customers, and learning from data, they begin to influence not only operational outcomes but also organizational roles and decision architectures.

Addressing this gap requires moving beyond tool-centric interpretations of AI. A more comprehensive conceptual framework is needed to explain how generative agents interact with established marketing functions and reshape their interdependencies. To that end, this study adopts a conceptual research design that synthesizes service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008), marketing capabilities theory (Morgan et al., 2009; Teece, 2007), and digital transformation perspectives (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). By integrating these theoretical streams, the study develops a structured lens for understanding agent-led marketing transformation.

Based on the identified gap, the study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How do generative AI agents reshape the structural configuration of core marketing functions?

RQ2: In what ways does the integration of generative agents redistribute agency between human marketers and intelligent systems?

RQ3: How can an agent-oriented conceptual framework explain marketing transformation in the generative AI era?

Agent-Oriented Transformation of Marketing Functions in the Generative AI Era: Introducing the Marketing Agent Loop

To answer these questions, the study introduces the Marketing Agent Loop (MAL), a conceptual model that frames marketing as a recursive system of sensing, generating, interacting, and learning. Rather than treating generative AI as a peripheral tool, the MAL conceptualizes intelligent agents as functional actors operating within strategically guided human oversight. In this context, human oversight refers to the continuous supervisory and interpretive role through which marketers evaluate, guide, and ethically monitor AI-generated outputs within strategic and regulatory boundaries. This perspective contributes to marketing theory by reframing AI as an embedded participant in value creation and organizational adaptation. It also provides managerial guidance for firms seeking to design marketing systems in which technological capability and human judgment operate in coordinated balance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Generative Artificial Intelligence in Marketing

Artificial intelligence has been embedded in marketing practice for several decades, particularly in data analytics, customer segmentation, recommendation systems, and automation of routine decision processes. Early applications were largely rule-based and focused on efficiency, optimization, and cost reduction. These systems enhanced targeting accuracy and predictive performance but remained structurally subordinate to human decision-makers (Davenport et al., 2020).

The emergence of generative artificial intelligence—particularly large language models—has expanded the functional scope of AI in marketing. Unlike earlier systems designed primarily for prediction or classification, generative AI systems can produce original content, interpret contextual signals, simulate dialogue, and adapt outputs dynamically. These capabilities have enabled automated copywriting, conversational customer engagement, dynamic pricing experimentation, and real-time campaign adaptation (Huang & Rust, 2021).

Recent studies emphasize that generative AI enhances personalization and accelerates strategic responsiveness (Bag et al., 2022; Dwivedi et al., 2021). More recent scholarship further suggests that generative AI is influencing how firms conceptualize customer interaction, creative processes, and strategic coordination (Chan & Choi, 2025; Grewal, 2025). These developments indicate that AI is no longer limited to supporting analytical tasks; it increasingly participates in creative and strategic domains. For example, Duivenvoorde (2025) argues that generative AI applications are transforming advertising creation, personalized messaging, and chatbot-led marketing interactions, while also raising novel consumer protection concerns under existing legal frameworks.

Despite these advances, much of the literature remains application-driven. It often evaluates performance improvements in specific tasks rather than examining how generative AI may reshape the internal logic and coordination of marketing functions. The dominant question continues to be how AI improves outcomes, rather than how it reorganizes marketing itself.

2.2. From Automation to Participation: AI as Actor or Tool?

Most existing research conceptualizes artificial intelligence as a technological tool that supports human expertise. Within this perspective, AI provides predictive insights, automates execution, or enhances operational scale, while humans retain primary strategic authority (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2018). This understanding reflects earlier stages of digital marketing, where

technology extended organizational capacity without fundamentally altering the distribution of agency.

However, generative AI increasingly challenges this assumption. Systems capable of generating strategic alternatives, interacting autonomously with customers, and refining outputs through iterative feedback begin to function less as passive instruments and more as operational contributors. Rust (2020) argues that AI is progressively participating in value creation processes rather than merely executing predefined instructions. Similarly, it is suggested that AI may assume roles involving mechanical, analytical, and even affective intelligence (Huang & Rust, 2021).

More recent discussions surrounding “agentic AI” further reinforce this shift. Emerging research highlights how generative systems exhibit operational autonomy, multi-step reasoning, and adaptive coordination across tasks (Abou Ali et al., 2026). In this context, autonomy refers to the bounded operational capacity of AI systems to generate, adjust, and refine outputs without direct human execution at every stage, while remaining embedded within strategic and organizational constraints. This bounded autonomy distinguishes generative agents from earlier automation tools that required explicit instruction for each action.

Despite growing recognition of agent autonomy, its structural implications for marketing remain insufficiently theorized. Existing studies acknowledge autonomous capabilities, yet they rarely examine how core marketing functions are reconfigured when generative agents actively participate in sensing, generating, interacting, and learning processes. Consequently, the question of how agency is redistributed within marketing systems remains underdeveloped.

2.3. AI-Enabled Marketing Frameworks

Several conceptual frameworks attempt to explain AI’s role in marketing. Some describe stages of AI adoption, progressing from automation to advanced analytics and personalization (Davenport et al., 2020). Others emphasize AI’s contribution to customer experience and service intelligence (Huang & Rust, 2021), or its integration within digital business strategy (Bharadwaj et al., 2013).

While these models provide important foundations, they remain largely high-level. They typically describe capabilities rather than structural reconfiguration. For instance, frameworks frequently address personalization but rarely explain how product management, pricing, distribution, CRM, and research are reorganized when generative agents operate across them simultaneously.

Furthermore, many models implicitly assume a linear relationship between technology adoption and marketing outcomes. They conceptualize AI as a stage within digital transformation rather than as a recursive participant within organizational processes. As generative AI systems increasingly operate as coordinated agents rather than isolated tools, this linear perspective becomes insufficient.

Recent scholarship calls for more integrative approaches that account for human–AI collaboration and organizational redesign (Chan & Choi, 2025; Grewal, 2025). However, a function-level, agent-oriented framework that systematically maps how marketing is restructured under generative AI remains absent.

2.4. Summary of the Literature and Research Gap

The literature clearly demonstrates that generative AI enhances personalization, customer engagement, creative production, and strategic responsiveness (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Grewal, 2025; Huang & Rust, 2021). At the same time, most research continues to frame AI primarily as a performance-enhancing tool embedded within existing structures.

What remains underdeveloped is a structural and agent-oriented understanding of marketing transformation. Specifically, the literature lacks:

- A function-level explanation of how core marketing domains are redesigned through generative agents,
- An analysis of how these changes interact across functions rather than in isolation, and
- A conceptual account of how agency is redistributed between human marketers and intelligent systems in a continuous adaptive cycle.

Addressing this gap requires an integrative theoretical lens capable of explaining value co-creation, adaptive capability development, and structural transformation simultaneously. The following section therefore develops a multi-level theoretical foundation grounded in service-dominant logic, marketing capabilities theory, and digital transformation theory.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As generative AI systems become increasingly embedded in marketing practice, existing theoretical explanations require reconsideration. Traditional perspectives often treat artificial intelligence as a technological enhancement within established structures. However, generative AI agents demonstrate adaptive, interactive, and autonomous characteristics that challenge this assumption. A theoretical foundation is therefore necessary to explain how agency, value creation, and organizational coordination are reconfigured in agent-led environments.

This study integrates three complementary theoretical lenses: service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008), marketing capabilities theory (Morgan et al., 2009; Teece, 2007), and digital transformation theory (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). These perspectives are selected because they address distinct yet interconnected dimensions of marketing transformation.

Service-dominant logic explains how value is co-created through interaction. Marketing capabilities theory explains how firms develop adaptive and learning-based strengths. Digital transformation theory explains how emerging technologies reshape organizational structures and role configurations. Together, these frameworks provide a multi-level explanation of how generative AI agents operate not merely as tools, but as functional participants within marketing systems.

3.1. Service-Dominant Logic: Generative Agents as Operant Resources

Service-dominant logic reconceptualizes marketing as a process of value co-creation rather than value delivery (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Value does not reside in products or outputs; it emerges through interaction, use, and contextual integration (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). Within this framework, operant resources—those capable of acting upon other resources—are central to value creation (Lusch & Vargo, 2014).

Generative AI agents align with this definition. They interpret user input, adapt responses, and generate context-sensitive outputs in real time. Through conversational interaction and

iterative adjustment, they influence how customers experience meaning, relevance, and engagement. In doing so, agents function as operant resources within value co-creation processes.

Unlike earlier digital tools that executed predefined commands, generative agents participate within interaction itself. They contribute to shaping the experience rather than merely transmitting it. From a service-dominant perspective, this represents an expansion of the actors involved in value co-creation, extending agency beyond human participants to intelligent systems operating under guided oversight.

3.2. Marketing Capabilities Theory: Agents and Dynamic Adaptation

While service-dominant logic explains how value emerges through interaction, marketing capabilities theory explains how organizations sustain competitive advantage through adaptive routines (Morgan et al., 2009). Capabilities such as market sensing, learning, and strategic response enable firms to remain aligned with environmental change. Teece (2007) conceptualizes these processes as dynamic capabilities—the ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure competencies under shifting conditions.

Generative AI agents directly influence these processes. Their ability to process large-scale data, simulate alternative strategies, and generate adaptive outputs strengthens organizational sensing and response mechanisms. For example, agent-driven experimentation in pricing or messaging shortens the cycle between environmental signal and strategic adjustment.

However, capability enhancement does not occur automatically. It depends on how human decision-makers interpret, supervise, and integrate agent outputs. In this sense, generative agents extend dynamic capabilities while remaining embedded within socio-technical coordination structures. They amplify agility but do not replace strategic judgment.

3.3. Digital Transformation Theory: Structural Reconfiguration and Role Redistribution

Digital transformation theory emphasizes that technological change reshapes organizational logics, authority structures, and workflows (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). Transformation involves structural reconfiguration rather than incremental improvement.

Generative AI agents exemplify this structural shift. Their ability to generate content, coordinate across channels, and adapt through feedback blurs traditional boundaries between analytical, creative, and operational roles. Tasks that were once sequential and functionally distinct become integrated within agent-mediated processes.

This transformation redefines the marketer's role. Instead of serving primarily as executors of discrete tasks, marketers increasingly function as strategic orchestrators. In this study, strategic orchestration refers to the managerial coordination of human–AI collaboration, including the design of system boundaries, alignment of agent activities with strategic objectives, and integration of AI-generated insights into organizational decision processes. They define objectives, supervise outputs, ensure ethical compliance, and interpret complex signals. Agency becomes distributed rather than displaced.

Recent discussions on AI-enabled marketing roles further support this view, suggesting that intelligent systems increasingly participate in operational decision flows while humans maintain governance and interpretive authority (Huang & Rust, 2021). This redistribution of roles reflects structural adaptation rather than technological substitution.

3.4. Theoretical Integration

Individually, each framework explains a different dimension of agent-led transformation:

- Service-dominant logic explains how generative agents participate in value co-creation.
- Marketing capabilities theory explains how agents enhance sensing, learning, and adaptation.
- Digital transformation theory explains how agents reshape organizational structure and redistribute roles.

When integrated, these perspectives reveal a coherent theoretical foundation for agent-oriented marketing. Generative AI agents operate simultaneously at experiential (value), strategic (capability), and structural (organizational) levels. This multi-level integration supports the central claim of the study: generative agents do not merely improve marketing processes; they introduce a recursive logic of interaction, adaptation, and shared agency. By grounding the Marketing Agent Loop in these established theoretical traditions, the study provides conceptual clarity regarding how marketing evolves in the generative AI era.

4. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This study adopts a conceptual research design to develop a theoretical explanation of agent-oriented marketing transformation. Rather than conducting an empirical investigation, the study aims to clarify emerging structural changes in marketing by synthesizing and integrating existing theoretical perspectives. Conceptual research is particularly appropriate when a phenomenon is evolving rapidly and requires theoretical framing before large-scale empirical validation (MacInnis, 2011; Yadav, 2010).

The research process followed three stages.

First, a structured and focused literature review was conducted to identify key streams relevant to generative AI in marketing. Recent studies (2023–2026) on generative AI, AI agents, human–AI collaboration, digital transformation, and AI-enabled capabilities were examined across leading marketing, management, and information systems journals. The review revealed that although generative AI is widely discussed in terms of efficiency, automation, and personalization, limited attention has been given to its structural impact on core marketing functions.

Second, three complementary theoretical lenses were selected: service-dominant logic, marketing capabilities theory, and digital transformation theory. These perspectives were chosen because they address distinct yet interconnected dimensions of marketing transformation. Service-dominant logic explains value co-creation through interaction (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). Marketing capabilities theory explains adaptive and dynamic organizational processes (Morgan et al., 2009; Teece, 2007). Digital transformation theory explains structural and role reconfiguration driven by technology (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). Together, these frameworks provide a coherent basis for analyzing how generative AI agents reshape marketing at experiential, strategic, and organizational levels.

Third, based on this theoretical integration, the Marketing Agent Loop (MAL) was developed as a recursive model capturing sensing, generating, interacting, and learning as interdependent processes. The model was constructed through iterative conceptual refinement, ensuring internal coherence between theoretical foundations and functional redesign of marketing activities.

The present study does not employ primary data collection such as interviews or surveys. Instead, it contributes by offering a theoretically grounded architecture that can guide future empirical research. As generative AI technologies continue to evolve, conceptual clarification is a necessary step before measurement models and large-scale validation can be meaningfully developed. By explicitly articulating its conceptual methodology, this study positions itself as a theory-building contribution that invites subsequent empirical testing, rather than as a confirmatory empirical investigation. While empirical approaches such as semi-structured interviews could further enrich understanding of practitioner perspectives, the present study prioritizes theoretical clarification as a foundational step. Empirical validation is positioned as a subsequent research stage rather than a prerequisite for conceptual development.

5. AGENT-ORIENTED REDESIGN OF CORE MARKETING FUNCTIONS

Traditional marketing has long been organized around distinct functional domains: product management, pricing, distribution, promotion, customer relationship management, and marketing research. These domains evolved through digitalization and data-driven decision-making. However, generative AI agents introduce a transformation that extends beyond digitization. Rather than optimizing isolated tasks, agents influence how decisions are generated, how functions interact, and how authority is distributed across marketing systems.

From the perspective of the Marketing Agent Loop (MAL), functional redesign occurs through the recursive integration of sensing, generating, interacting, and learning. Each marketing domain becomes embedded within this continuous adaptive cycle. As a result, boundaries between functions become more fluid, and coordination becomes increasingly agent-mediated.

Table 1 summarizes the comparative shift from traditional configurations to agent-oriented structures. The following sections elaborate on how each function is structurally reconfigured.

Table 1: Agent-Oriented Redesign of Core Marketing Functions

Marketing Function (Traditional)	GPT Agent Capability	Transformed Function
Product Management: Human-led idea generation and iterative development	Real-time customer insight mining, concept testing, narrative generation	Agent-assisted product co- design
Pricing: Static models based on historical data	Dynamic pricing using demand signals, sentiment, and competitor data	Context-aware, predictive pricing
Distribution (Place): Fixed logistics and channel allocation	Demand forecasting and inventory balancing through pattern detection	Adaptive channel coordination

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Promotion (Communication): Manual content creation, slow A/B testing	Automated multichannel copywriting, tone adaptation, personalization	Hyper-personalized campaign orchestration
CRM: Segmentation-based engagement and rule-based communication	Emotion-sensitive interaction and conversational automation	Autonomous relationship management
Marketing Research: Survey- based and periodic data collection	Social listening, real-time trend detection, generative synthesis	Continuous insight generation and scenario simulation

5.1. Product Management

Traditionally, product management relied on structured research methods such as surveys, focus groups, and performance analysis. Decision cycles were often sequential and dependent on delayed feedback (Ulwick, 2005). Under agent-oriented systems, product development becomes continuously informed by real-time sensing of customer reviews, search behavior, and social media discourse (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Generative agents not only analyze data but also generate positioning alternatives, simulate user journeys, and draft product narratives (Rust, 2020). This shifts product management from episodic planning to iterative co-creation. From a service-dominant logic perspective, agents operate as operant resources contributing to value formation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Product design becomes a dynamic interaction among human vision, customer input, and agent-generated insight.

5.2. Pricing

Pricing has traditionally been based on cost structures, competitor benchmarking, and historical elasticity analysis (Kotler & Keller, 2016). These models often relied on periodic updates rather than continuous adjustment. Generative agents introduce dynamic recalibration. By sensing demand fluctuations, behavioral signals, and competitor movements, agents generate adaptive pricing scenarios (Bag et al., 2022). Simulation-based experimentation allows organizations to test alternatives before implementation (Davenport et al., 2020). From a marketing capabilities perspective, this accelerates dynamic capabilities by shortening the sensing–response cycle (Morgan et al., 2009; Teece, 2007). Pricing becomes embedded within the MAL feedback loop rather than remaining a static financial parameter.

5.3. Distribution (Place)

Distribution historically focused on logistical coordination, inventory planning, and channel selection (Christopher, 2016). Decisions were frequently reactive and separated from real-time customer interaction. With generative agents, distribution becomes predictive and interconnected. Agents integrate supply chain data, customer behavior, and digital signals to

anticipate regional demand shifts (Bag et al., 2022). Increased search intensity or online engagement can trigger proactive adjustments in inventory or channel emphasis (Davenport et al., 2020). From a digital transformation perspective, distribution evolves from a logistical function into an adaptive coordination mechanism embedded in continuous sensing and learning (Bharadwaj et al., 2013).

5.4. Promotion (Communication)

Promotion traditionally relied on human creativity and extended campaign cycles (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Generative agents compress these cycles by producing multi-platform content variations, optimizing tone for segments, and reallocating resources based on engagement metrics (Huang & Rust, 2021). Within the MAL framework, communication becomes an interactive loop. Agents sense engagement patterns, generate alternative messaging, interact conversationally, and learn from feedback. From a service-dominant logic lens, promotion shifts from one-way broadcasting to participatory value co-creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Marketing capabilities theory further explains how continuous experimentation enhances organizational responsiveness (Morgan et al., 2009).

5.5. CRM (Customer Relationship Management)

CRM systems have historically operated through segmented databases and rule-based communication protocols. Agent-led CRM systems extend relational capacity by engaging customers through natural language interfaces and real-time sentiment analysis. Generative agents sustain ongoing dialogue, personalize responses at scale, and maintain continuity across touchpoints (Huang & Rust, 2021). In doing so, they expand relational value creation. From a capabilities perspective, CRM becomes an always-on sensing and interaction mechanism embedded within the MAL cycle.

5.6. Marketing Research

Marketing research traditionally relied on periodic surveys and structured data analysis (Malhotra et al., 2017). Insight generation often occurred at discrete intervals. Generative agents transform research into a continuous intelligence process. By analyzing unstructured data streams from reviews, forums, and interaction logs, agents detect emerging themes and emotional patterns in real time (Dwivedi et al., 2021). This shortens the distance between sensing and strategic response (Davenport et al., 2020). From a dynamic capabilities perspective, research becomes embedded within adaptive organizational learning (Teece, 2007). Rather than functioning as a separate analytical stage, it becomes integrated into ongoing operational processes.

6. A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR AGENT-ORIENTED MARKETING TRANSFORMATION

The increasing integration of generative AI into marketing requires more than incremental refinement of existing frameworks. While much of the literature positions artificial intelligence as a supporting technology embedded within predefined organizational structures, generative AI agents increasingly influence how marketing decisions are generated, coordinated, and revised. A structural clarification is therefore necessary.

Agent-Oriented Transformation of Marketing Functions in the Generative AI Era: Introducing the Marketing Agent Loop

This study introduces the Marketing Agent Loop (MAL) as a conceptual framework for understanding how generative agents participate in marketing systems. The MAL conceptualizes marketing as a recursive cycle composed of four interconnected functions: sensing, generating, interacting, and learning. Unlike linear models, it emphasizes continuous adaptation guided by human oversight.

Before detailing the loop, three key concepts require definition:

Agent autonomy refers to the capacity of generative AI systems to analyze inputs, produce outputs, and adjust responses without direct human execution at every stage. Autonomy operates within strategic and ethical boundaries rather than in isolation from managerial intent.

Human oversight denotes the interpretive, supervisory, and ethical monitoring exercised by marketers over agent outputs. It ensures alignment with brand values, regulatory constraints, and organizational objectives.

Strategic orchestration describes the coordinating role of marketers in designing workflows, setting decision parameters, and integrating agent outputs into broader strategic processes.

Within this clarified structure, the MAL consists of four simultaneous functions:

Sense: Agents continuously analyze structured and unstructured data, including behavioral patterns, market dynamics, and competitive signals (Dwivedi et al., 2021). This enables real-time environmental alignment.

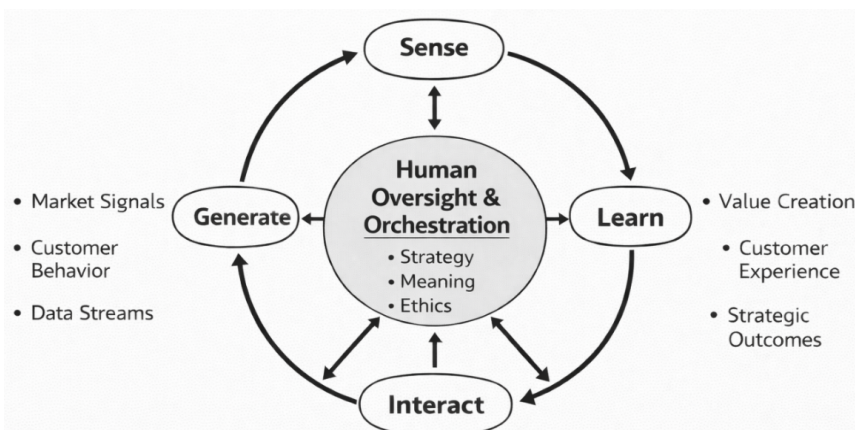
Generate: Based on sensed inputs, agents produce adaptive outputs such as pricing adjustments, campaign alternatives, and content drafts (Chan & Choi, 2025).

Interact: Agents engage customers and internal stakeholders through conversational interfaces, transforming communication into ongoing dialogue (Rust, 2020; Vargo & Lusch, 2008).

Learn: Each interaction generates feedback. Agents update models, and organizations interpret outcomes to refine subsequent strategic decisions, reinforcing dynamic capabilities (Teece, 2007).

To clarify the structural logic of the Marketing Agent Loop, Figure 1 illustrates the model as a recursive system composed of four interconnected functions: sensing, generating, interacting, and learning.

Figure 1: The Marketing Agent Loop (MAL): A Continuous System of Human-Agent Collaboration



As shown in Figure 1, these functions do not operate sequentially. Instead, they form a continuous feedback structure in which learning informs subsequent sensing, generating shapes interaction, and interaction produces new data for adaptation. At the center of the loop, human oversight and strategic orchestration guide the system by defining boundaries, aligning actions with strategic intent, and ensuring ethical accountability. The model therefore represents distributed agency: generative agents perform adaptive operations, while human actors provide interpretive direction and governance.

By integrating service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008), marketing capabilities theory (Morgan et al., 2009), and digital transformation theory (Bharadwaj et al., 2013), the MAL reframes generative AI from a supportive tool to a structural participant in marketing systems. Marketing is thus understood as an interconnected, evolving system of sensing, acting, and learning rather than a sequence of isolated functions.

7. OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS OF AGENT-LED MARKETING SYSTEMS

The integration of generative AI agents into marketing systems creates a dual dynamic. On one hand, agent-led systems expand organizational capabilities and accelerate adaptive processes. On the other hand, they introduce new governance, ethical, and organizational challenges. This duality reflects the socio-technical nature of agent-oriented transformation. Technological capability alone does not determine outcomes; its impact depends on how autonomy is balanced with oversight.

7.1. Opportunities

7.1.1 Hyper-Personalization at Scale

Generative agents enable real-time personalization by interpreting language patterns, behavioral signals, and contextual cues. Unlike traditional segmentation models, personalization becomes continuous rather than periodic (Huang & Rust, 2021). This framework strengthens the sensing–generating loop by aligning outputs more closely with evolving customer needs.

7.1.2 Strategic Agility

Agent-led systems reduce the time between environmental change and organizational response. Pricing, content, and communication strategies can be adjusted dynamically (Davenport et al., 2020). This enhances dynamic capabilities by accelerating the sensing–learning cycle and supporting more adaptive strategic execution.

7.1.3 Continuous Customer Interaction

GPT-based agents enable persistent engagement across touchpoints. This transforms CRM from episodic transactions into ongoing relational interaction. Continuous dialogue reinforces value co-creation and strengthens long-term relationship capital.

7.1.4 Augmented Creativity

Rather than replacing creative professionals, generative agents expand the range of ideation and experimentation (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2018). They provide alternative narratives, stylistic variations, and simulation-based insights, enabling marketers to focus on interpretation and strategic coherence.

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7.1.5 Intelligent Experimentation

Agent-based systems enable rapid testing and scenario simulation. Continuous experimentation reduces strategic uncertainty and supports organizational learning (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Within the MAL, experimentation reinforces the recursive nature of marketing adaptation.

7.2. Risks and Governance Challenges

7.2.1 Authenticity and Trust

When customers cannot clearly distinguish between human and agent-generated communication, perceived authenticity may decline. Misalignment between generated content and brand identity can weaken trust (Kirkby et al., 2023). This highlights the importance of human oversight within agent-mediated interaction.

7.2.2 Ethical and Privacy Risks

Personalization relies on extensive data processing. Without transparent governance structures, risks related to consent, privacy, and algorithmic fairness may intensify (Floridi & Cows, 2019). Ethical safeguards must therefore be embedded within agent architectures.

7.2.3 Over-Reliance on Agents

Excessive dependence on generative outputs may erode human judgment, cultural sensitivity, and contextual awareness (Prabhakaran et al., 2022). In agent-oriented systems, maintaining interpretive authority is critical.

7.2.4 Algorithmic Bias

Agents trained on skewed datasets may reproduce systemic inequalities. Without auditing and transparency mechanisms, such bias may undermine brand credibility and trigger regulatory consequences (Binns et al., 2018).

7.2.5 Organizational Misalignment

Introducing agent systems without structural redesign can create friction between human teams and AI processes. Digital transformation requires role reconfiguration and workflow alignment (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). Otherwise, technological integration may weaken rather than strengthen strategic coherence.

8. CONCEPTUAL FINDINGS

The conceptual analysis reveals that generative AI agents do not merely enhance discrete marketing activities; they reorganize the structural logic through which marketing functions operate. When examined through the lens of the Marketing Agent Loop (MAL), four interdependent transformation patterns become visible: reconfiguration of sensing, generative restructuring of decision processes, interactional redistribution of agency, and recursive organizational learning. These transformations do not occur in isolation; rather, they reinforce one another within a continuous adaptive cycle.

8.1. Reconfiguration of Sensing: From Periodic Insight to Continuous Environmental Alignment

Traditionally, market sensing has relied on periodic research activities, structured reports, and delayed feedback loops. Under agent participation, sensing becomes embedded and continuous. Generative systems process structured and unstructured signals—behavioral data, conversational input, sentiment indicators, and contextual trends—in real time.

This shift alters not only the speed of information gathering but its organizational function. Sensing is no longer confined to marketing research departments; it becomes distributed across customer interaction points, pricing systems, and content generation processes. Each agent-mediated action simultaneously produces new data, which feeds back into subsequent sensing. As a result, marketing evolves from episodic analysis to ongoing environmental alignment.

This finding directly supports the recursive logic of the MAL: sensing is not a preliminary stage but a continuously active process intertwined with generation, interaction, and learning.

8.2. Generative Restructuring of Decision Processes

The second transformation concerns the generative dimension of decision-making. In traditional configurations, strategic alternatives are developed primarily through human deliberation supported by analytical tools. With generative agents, the production of strategic options becomes iterative and data-responsive.

Agents do not merely execute decisions; they generate alternatives—pricing variations, message adaptations, simulation scenarios—and refine them dynamically. This reduces the temporal gap between signal detection and strategic adjustment. More importantly, it changes the architecture of decision formation. Decisions increasingly emerge from collaborative human–AI processes rather than from sequential analysis followed by execution.

This generative restructuring strengthens dynamic capabilities by accelerating sensing–response cycles. However, it also redistributes interpretive responsibility. Human actors retain strategic authority, but their role shifts toward evaluating and selecting among AI-generated alternatives rather than constructing each alternative independently.

8.3. Interactional Redistribution of Agency

A third pattern concerns how interaction is reorganized. In agent-oriented marketing systems, communication becomes dialogical and adaptive rather than campaign-based and linear. Generative agents engage customers through natural language interfaces, personalize exchanges, and coordinate responses across channels.

This development does not eliminate human agency but redistributes it. Agency becomes shared within a hybrid system. Agents handle scale, responsiveness, and iterative adaptation, while human marketers provide strategic direction, ethical oversight, and contextual interpretation.

Importantly, this redistribution represents structural participation rather than substitution. The system operates through bounded autonomy: agents act within predefined strategic and governance parameters. The effectiveness of interaction therefore depends on orchestration rather than automation alone.

8.4. Recursive Organizational Learning

The final transformation concerns learning. In traditional marketing systems, learning often follows campaign completion through post-hoc evaluation. Under the MAL architecture, learning becomes embedded within ongoing operations.

Every interaction generates data. Every generative output creates feedback. Every pricing adjustment produces behavioral signals. These feedback loops refine subsequent sensing and generation processes, creating a recursive cycle.

This recursive structure transforms marketing into a continuously adaptive system rather than a sequence of discrete campaigns. Learning is not an endpoint but a stabilizing and renewing mechanism within the loop. Organizational capabilities evolve dynamically as human interpretation and algorithmic updating interact.

8.5. Integrated Structural Transformation

Taken together, these findings indicate that agent-led marketing is not simply faster marketing. It is structurally different marketing. Core functions—product development, pricing, promotion, CRM, and research—become interconnected through shared data flows and adaptive feedback mechanisms. Functional boundaries blur because the MAL integrates sensing, generating, interacting, and learning into a unified architecture.

Most importantly, agency is redistributed rather than replaced. Human oversight and strategic orchestration remain central, but they operate within a system where intelligent agents actively participate in shaping outcomes. Marketing thus evolves into a hybrid socio-technical structure characterized by recursion, coordination, and shared agency.

9. DISCUSSION

9.1. Comparison with Prior Literature

Prior research has largely examined AI in marketing through the lenses of efficiency, automation, and personalization (Davenport et al., 2020; Huang & Rust, 2021). These studies demonstrate how AI improves performance and streamlines decision processes. However, AI is often conceptualized as a supportive instrument rather than as an embedded actor within marketing systems.

The present study extends this perspective. It argues that generative AI agents do not merely enhance existing tasks. Instead, they participate in the internal organization of marketing functions. The Marketing Agent Loop (MAL) conceptualizes marketing as a recursive system in which agency is distributed between human and artificial actors.

Unlike stage-based or capability-focused frameworks, the MAL emphasizes structural interconnection. Product management, pricing, communication, CRM, and research are not treated as isolated domains. They are interdependent functions shaped by agent participation.

The MAL also challenges the assumption that technological maturity progresses linearly. Rather than unfolding in stages, generative agents operate recursively across functions. Transformation occurs simultaneously rather than sequentially. This perspective moves beyond efficiency-centric interpretations and advances a structural understanding of AI-enabled marketing.

9.2. Theoretical Interpretation

From a service-dominant logic perspective, value emerges through interaction (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). In agent-oriented systems, this interaction extends beyond the firm–customer relationship. It includes collaboration between human marketers and intelligent systems. Generative agents function as operant resources by contributing adaptive knowledge and contextual output to value creation processes.

From a marketing capabilities perspective, agent systems strengthen dynamic capabilities. They accelerate sensing, learning, and response cycles (Morgan et al., 2009; Teece, 2007). However, this acceleration does not eliminate human judgment. Strategic alignment and contextual interpretation remain essential. The effectiveness of agent systems depends on how carefully human actors guide and evaluate their outputs.

From a digital transformation perspective, generative agents reshape organizational design (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). They redistribute decision authority, alter workflows, and redefine professional roles. Marketing work shifts from task execution toward orchestration. Human actors define strategic direction and ensure governance, while agents provide analytical speed and adaptive responsiveness.

Taken together, these perspectives suggest that agent-led marketing is not simply a faster version of traditional practice. It represents a structural transformation in how marketing systems learn, coordinate, and create value.

10. CONTRIBUTIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1. Theoretical Contributions

This study advances the marketing literature by offering an agent-oriented reinterpretation of generative AI's role within marketing systems.

First, it reconceptualizes artificial intelligence not merely as a technological support tool, but as a functional participant in marketing processes. While prior research has largely emphasized efficiency gains, automation, and personalization (Davenport et al., 2020; Huang & Rust, 2021), the present study extends this discussion by examining how generative agents participate in sensing, decision formation, interaction, and learning. This shift from “AI as tool” to “AI as actor” contributes to emerging debates about distributed agency in digital organizations (Rust, 2020).

Second, the study introduces the Marketing Agent Loop (MAL) as a conceptual model that explains marketing as a recursive and adaptive system. Unlike linear adoption frameworks, the MAL integrates sensing, generating, interacting, and learning into a continuous cycle shaped by both human oversight and agent autonomy. By emphasizing feedback, recursion, and shared agency, the model extends AI-enabled marketing frameworks beyond stage-based or task-based explanations (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Third, the study integrates service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008), marketing capabilities theory (Morgan et al., 2009), and digital transformation theory (Bharadwaj et al., 2013) into a unified explanation of agent-led transformation. This integration demonstrates that generative AI affects marketing simultaneously at three levels: experiential (value co-creation), strategic (dynamic capabilities), and organizational (structural redesign). By bridging these theoretical traditions, the study contributes a systemic understanding of how marketing evolves in the era of generative AI.

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Collectively, these contributions reposition generative AI from an operational enhancer to a structural component of marketing systems.

10.2. Practical Contributions

Beyond its theoretical implications, this study provides a structured framework for organizations navigating generative AI integration.

The Marketing Agent Loop offers managers a way to move beyond fragmented AI implementation. Rather than applying generative systems to isolated tasks—such as content drafting or chatbot interaction—the MAL encourages firms to design integrated, feedback-driven marketing systems. It highlights how sensing, generating, interacting, and learning must be coordinated rather than siloed.

The framework also clarifies that technological capability alone does not guarantee competitive advantage. Organizational alignment, governance mechanisms, and capability development are equally critical (Morgan et al., 2009; Teece, 2007). Firms that treat generative agents as isolated automation tools risk underutilizing their adaptive potential.

In practical terms, the study encourages firms to:

- Align AI deployment with strategic objectives rather than short-term efficiency goals.
- Redesign workflows to support continuous feedback loops.
- Establish clear boundaries for agent autonomy and human oversight.

Thus, the practical contribution lies not in prescribing specific technologies, but in offering a structural lens through which organizations can evaluate and redesign their marketing systems.

10.3. Managerial Implications

Agent-oriented marketing requires a redefinition of managerial responsibility.

First, managers must transition from task supervision to system orchestration. As generative agents participate in multiple marketing functions, leadership shifts toward coordinating human–AI collaboration, defining strategic boundaries, and ensuring alignment with brand identity.

Second, transparency becomes central to trust. As AI-generated communication becomes increasingly indistinguishable from human output, managers must establish disclosure policies and monitoring systems that preserve authenticity and customer confidence (Huang & Rust, 2021).

Third, capability development must expand beyond technical training. Marketers need skills in interpretation, ethical evaluation, and cross-functional coordination. The value of human judgment becomes more—not less—important in agent-led systems.

Finally, governance mechanisms must address issues of bias, fairness, and accountability (Binns et al., 2018; Floridi & Cowls, 2019). Without structured oversight, speed and personalization may come at the expense of ethical coherence and long-term trust.

In this context, successful agent-oriented marketing depends on balancing autonomy with accountability. Technological sophistication alone does not create advantage. Advantage emerges when intelligent systems operate within structured human guidance.

11. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The agent-oriented perspective developed in this study reframes marketing as a recursive system of human–AI collaboration. While the Marketing Agent Loop (MAL) provides a conceptual foundation, its implications require empirical validation and further theoretical refinement. Generative AI agents reshape agency, coordination, and organizational design. Future research should therefore examine these structural shifts in greater depth.

11.1. Human–Agent Co-Creation and the Redistribution of Agency

This study conceptualizes generative agents as operant resources participating in value co-creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). However, the lived dynamics of shared agency remain underexplored.

Future research should investigate how strategic control, creative authorship, and decision authority are negotiated between human marketers and intelligent systems. How do hybrid human–AI roles evolve over time? How is accountability assigned when decisions emerge from collaborative processes?

Qualitative designs such as ethnography, in-depth interviews, and longitudinal case studies can illuminate how marketers experience and interpret AI collaboration (Davenport & Mittal, 2022). Such research would clarify how distributed agency operates in practice rather than remaining a conceptual abstraction.

11.2. Trust, Authenticity, and Perceived Agency

Generative AI complicates the foundations of authenticity in marketing relationships. When customers interact with AI-generated content, perceptions of transparency and credibility may shift (Liu-Thompkins et al., 2022).

Experimental and longitudinal studies can compare human-authored and AI-generated communication. These designs would clarify when agent-mediated interaction strengthens brand trust and when it undermines it. Future research should also explore how perceptions of machine autonomy influence consumer responses. Do customers react differently when they perceive a system as autonomous rather than scripted? Understanding these dynamics would extend research on AI-enabled customer experience (Huang & Rust, 2021).

11.3. Ethical Governance and Accountability

As generative systems scale personalization and experimentation, risks of bias and opacity increase (Binns et al., 2018; Floridi & Cowls, 2019). Future research should develop operational governance frameworks tailored to marketing contexts.

Scholars can examine audit mechanisms for generative outputs, fairness metrics for personalization systems, and transparency strategies that influence reputational outcomes. Research may also investigate how organizations institutionalize AI oversight through cross-functional committees or formal review structures.

11.4. Organizational Integration and Structural Adaptation

Digital transformation reshapes roles and structures rather than merely improving processes (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). The MAL suggests that generative agents redistribute decision

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flows across marketing functions. However, empirical evidence on this structural adaptation remains limited.

Comparative case studies across firms at different levels of AI maturity could identify patterns of successful integration. They may also reveal sources of organizational friction. Such research would clarify whether agent-oriented marketing requires incremental adaptation or deeper structural redesign.

11.5. Quantitative Validation of the Marketing Agent Loop

As a conceptual model, the MAL invites empirical testing. Future studies should operationalize its components—sensing, generating, interacting, and learning—and examine their relationships with organizational outcomes.

Survey-based studies, structural equation modeling, and field experiments can test how agent participation influences marketing capabilities, strategic agility, customer trust, and firm performance (Morgan et al., 2009; Teece, 2007). A/B testing designs can compare agent-generated and human-generated strategies under real market conditions (Dwivedi et al., 2021)

Such quantitative inquiry would move the field from conceptual plausibility toward empirical validation. This step is essential for strengthening the theoretical robustness of agent-oriented marketing research.

12. CONCLUSION

Generative AI has moved beyond its initial role as a tool for task automation in marketing. It increasingly participates in sensing market signals, generating strategic alternatives, interacting with stakeholders, and learning from ongoing feedback. In response to this transformation, this study introduced the Marketing Agent Loop (MAL) as a conceptual framework that redefines marketing as a recursive system of human–agent collaboration.

The analysis suggests that agent-led marketing represents more than incremental efficiency gains. It entails a structural reconfiguration of how marketing functions are coordinated, how decision authority is distributed, and how value is co-created across organizational processes. By reframing generative AI as a functional participant embedded within marketing systems—rather than as a peripheral technological aid—the study offers a structural and integrative explanation of shared agency in contemporary marketing environments. At the same time, the findings underscore that autonomy does not imply displacement. Human oversight and strategic orchestration remain essential for ensuring alignment, accountability, and long-term coherence. Ultimately, the trajectory of marketing transformation will depend not solely on technological sophistication, but on how thoughtfully organizations design hybrid architectures in which intelligent agents and human judgment operate in deliberate and balanced coordination.

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