

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN GLOBAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS – BETWEEN HUMAN CREATIVITY AND ALGORITHMIC PRECISION

MESTERSÉGES INTELLIGENCIA A GLOBÁLIS MARKETINGKAMPÁNYOKBAN – AZ EMBERI KREATIVITÁS ÉS ALGORITMIKUS PONTOSSÁG KÖZÖTT

This article analyzes the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on global marketing campaigns through a qualitative comparative analysis of nine case studies from various industries and markets. Using a four-level typology of human–AI collaboration, the study demonstrates that AI enhances personalization, automation, and operational efficiency but cannot replace human creativity, intuition, and cultural sensitivity. Combining a structured literature review with case-based evidence, the paper reveals the growing importance of hybrid models in which algorithmic technologies support creative processes. The findings show that the most successful campaigns emerge from the synergy between AI’s analytical capabilities and human emotional competence. The article contributes to international marketing theory by integrating technological, creative, and cultural perspectives and offers practical recommendations for managers on the ethical and sustainable use of AI in complex, multicultural market contexts.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, global marketing, campaigns, personalization, creativity, standardization

Ez a cikk a mesterséges intelligencia (MI) hatását elemzi a globális marketingkampányokra kilenc különböző ipárból és piacról származó esettanulmány kvalitatív összehasonlító elemzésén keresztül. Egy négy szintű ember-MI együttműködési tipológiát használva a tanulmány bemutatja, hogy az MI javítja a személyre szabást, az automatizálást és az üzemeltetési hatékonyságot, de nem helyettesítheti az emberi kreativitást, intuíciót és kulturális érzékenységet. A strukturált irodalmi áttekintést esetalapú bizonyítékokkal kombinálva a cikk feltárja a hibrid modellek növekvő jelentőségét, amelyekben az algoritmikus technológiák támogatják a kreatív folyamatokat. Az eredmények azt mutatják, hogy a legsikeresebb kampányok az MI analitikai képességei és az emberi érzelmi kompetencia szinergiájából születnek. A cikk a technológiai, kreatív és kulturális perspektívák integrálásával járul hozzá a nemzetközi marketingelmülethez, és gyakorlati ajánlásokat kínál a menedzserek számára az MI etikus és fenntartható használatára vonatkozóan összetett, multikulturális piaci környezetben.

Kulcsszavak: mesterséges intelligencia, globális marketing, kampányok, személyre szabás, kreativitás, szabványosítás

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Artificial intelligence is redefining the landscape of global marketing. Through sophisticated algorithms, AI provides new tools for data analysis, customer segmentation, and the personalization of marketing content. As a result, brands are increasingly turning to intelligent systems to optimize their communication strategies and reach consumers more effectively across diverse markets. However, the increasing use of AI also raises several concerns, including ethical issues, the risk of cultural insensitivity, the potential for over-standardization, and the loss of the human touch in brand communication. While artificial intelligence in marketing has been increasingly explored, prior research often separates technical implementation from branding strategy. This article addresses a research gap by examining the intersection of human–AI collaboration and its cultural implications in global campaigns—a perspective that has received limited empirical attention.

This article seeks to fill an important gap in the literature by examining how AI is used in global marketing campaigns and how it complements—or potentially replaces—human creativity. The analysis focuses on five key research questions: (RQ1) What limitations does artificial intelligence have in the design of global marketing campaigns? (RQ2) What advantages does artificial intelligence offer over human input in global marketing? (RQ3) In what areas do humans maintain an advantage over artificial intelligence? (RQ4) Is there a risk that the use of AI will result in the excessive standardization of marketing strategies? (RQ5) Which areas of global marketing are best suited to AI integration?

To address these questions, the paper presents a structured literature review followed by the qualitative analysis of selected international campaigns that exemplify different levels of AI involvement. The results are discussed in light of academic theory and practical marketing considerations.

The selection of the nine case studies was guided by the intention to capture diversity across industries, geographic markets, and types of AI applications in marketing. The cases represent a balanced sample of global campaigns—ranging from data-intensive platforms (e.g., Netflix, IBM Watson) to emotionally driven brand narratives (e.g., Apple, Dos Equis). This variety allows for identifying patterns of AI–human interaction that transcend individual sectors and illustrate broader trends in contemporary marketing communication.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing the way brands conduct marketing campaigns in the global arena. The digital age we live in is opening new opportunities for companies looking to reach their consumers in a more personalized and effective way. Thanks to advanced algorithms, AI makes it possible to analyze vast amounts of data, predict consumer behavior, automate tasks and create more engaging content (Adobe, 2024). This article discusses how artificial intelligence is changing the face of global marketing campaigns, offering businesses new branding tools.

When asked a question about the characteristics of AI (artificial intelligence), Chat GPT 4 generated the following responses at points (ChatGPT4) (Table 1).

Table 1

Characteristics of artificial intelligence according to ChatGPT4

No	Feature	Description
1.	Adaptability	AI has the ability to adapt to changing data and environments without manual programming
2.	Automatic reasoning	Ability to solve problems based on available data, often used in decision support systems
3.	Autonomy	AI systems can operate independently, making decisions without human oversight in specific contexts.
4.	Interdisciplinarity	AI combines elements of computer science, mathematics, psychology, linguistics and other disciplines to create systems that can effectively simulate various aspects of human intelligence.
5.	Optimization	AI can analyze vast amounts of data to find the most effective solutions to complex problems
6.	Perception	AI can interpret the world using data from sensors, such as cameras (computer vision) or microphones (speech recognition), mimicking human senses.
7.	Natural language processing (NLP)	Allows machines to understand and interpret human language, enabling communication between humans and computers.
8.	Simulation of human reasoning	AI is designed to mimic thought processes characteristic of humans, such as learning, reasoning and independent decision-making.
9.	Machine learning	A subfield of AI that deals with algorithms and statistical techniques that enable machines to improve their performance based on experience.
10.	Reinforcement learning	A method of machine learning in which a system learns through rewards and punishments, gradually optimizing its actions to achieve a specific goal.

Note: Table 1 summarizes model-generated characteristics (ChatGPT-4) to illustrate common functional descriptors of AI; it is not treated as empirical evidence in this study.

Source: own compilation based on responses generated by Chat GTP4

The paper analyses a selection of case studies of leading brands that are using AI to create global campaigns, highlighting how the technology is enabling them to transcend traditional communication and cultural barriers, paving the way for a more globalized and integrated approach to marketing. Against a backdrop of increasing competition and ever-changing consumer preferences, AI is becoming not only a tool to help reach a wide audience, but also a key enabler to build more meaningful relationships with customers around the world. Despite these historical changes, however, it is important to emphasize that the marketer will remain an important part of designing global marketing campaigns.

Methodology

This study applies Robert Yin's (2018) multiple-case study approach, with purposive sampling to select campaigns based on sectoral diversity, global visibility, and levels of AI integration. Data were obtained from publicly available sources, including company websites, industry reports, academic publications, and verified media coverage. Campaigns were coded using a four-dimensional framework: AI role, human role, technological implementation, and global impact. Triangulation and analytical comparison ensure robustness and consistency across case interpretations.

The selection and interpretation of case studies are informed by conceptual anchors from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), and Dynamic Capabilities Theory, providing a multi-theoretical lens through which the interplay between AI and human creativity in global campaigns is examined.

Research Design

The present study adopts a qualitative, exploratory research design. It combines a structured review of academic literature with a comparative analysis of selected global marketing campaigns. This methodological approach allows for both theoretical insight and practical illustration.

Literature Selection Criteria

The literature analyzed was selected based on relevance to the use of AI in marketing, with a focus on sources published between 2018 and 2024. The inclusion criteria emphasized peer-reviewed journal articles and academic monographs that address conceptual frameworks or empirical applications of AI in marketing. Additional industry reports and practitioner-oriented studies were used to support the analysis of real-world cases.

The structured literature review followed a transparent and replicable protocol. Sources were identified through searches in *Researchgate*, and *Google Scholar* databases, using the keywords “*artificial intelligence and marketing*,” “*AI and global campaigns*,” “*AI and creativity*,” “*human–AI collaboration in marketing*,” and “*AI personalization*.” The time frame covered the years 2018–2024, ensuring

contemporary relevance. Inclusion criteria encompassed peer-reviewed journal articles, monographs, and credible industry reports that addressed conceptual, methodological, or practical aspects of AI use in marketing. Studies that lacked direct reference to campaign design or cultural aspects were excluded.

For each selected campaign, data were coded across four analytical dimensions: (1) AI role (low, moderate, high), (2) human role (creative, supervisory, minimal), (3) technology implementation (data-driven, hybrid, or experiential), and (4) global impact (measured by geographic reach and cultural resonance). Coding decisions were based on triangulated data from academic, industry, and media sources to ensure internal validity and transparency.

Case Study Selection and Rationale

The case studies were selected to represent a spectrum of global marketing campaigns characterized by varying degrees of AI involvement. Selection criteria included international visibility, clear use of AI tools (or the deliberate absence thereof), the campaign's cultural impact, and the availability of reliable documentation. The aim was to illustrate how AI contributes to campaign success, while also highlighting the continued relevance of human creativity. The chosen cases collectively represent a continuum of human–AI interaction and include both legacy campaigns known for human creativity and contemporary examples demonstrating AI-driven innovation. This diversity allows the typology to capture the entire spectrum—from symbolic, emotion-driven storytelling to algorithmically optimized personalization—thereby strengthening the analytical validity of the comparative approach.

Analytical Framework

Each campaign was analyzed using a consistent framework that focused on four key dimensions: (1) the role of AI in campaign design or delivery; (2) the extent of human involvement in creative and strategic elements; (3) the main technologies and platforms used; and (4) the campaign's impact and effectiveness at the global level.

Literature Review

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become a transformative force in marketing, prompting a surge of academic and practical interest. The literature on AI in marketing reflects both theoretical developments and empirical explorations, often intersecting with strategic management, consumer behavior, and technological innovation. This review critically synthesizes the existing body of knowledge, drawing upon selected academic publications, industry reports, and cross-disciplinary analyses. For clarity, the discussion is organized into five thematic areas: (1) AI capabilities and classification, (2) strategic applications and business value, (3) creativity and human–AI collaboration, (4) ethical and operational risks, and (5) managerial perspectives and industry insights.

AI Capabilities and Classification

Alexa et al. (2024) provide a comprehensive framework that categorizes AI tools according to their function in decision-making, automation, and data processing. This categorization includes natural language processing, machine learning, and predictive analytics, all of which shape modern marketing strategies. Arvinth et al. (2024) emphasize that AI capabilities must be understood in the context of shifting consumer expectations and digital transition. Their analysis underlines the layered structure of AI tools: from basic automation to adaptive and cognitive AI that learns from behavioral patterns. Feng et al. (2021) present a bibliometric study showing the dominance of certain AI capabilities in marketing literature, while Grandinetti (2020) and Vishnoi & Bagga (2019) explore how these capabilities influence core marketing principles.

Strategic Applications and Business Value

Strategic applications of AI have focused on personalization, customer engagement, and real-time decision-making. Chintalapati & Pandey (2022) and Chandra (2020) highlight how AI supports segmentation, lead qualification, and innovation within campaign design. Dimitrieska et al. (2018) stress AI's contribution to operational efficiency and customer profiling, while Eriksson et al. (2020) examine how AI transforms marketing strategy formulation. Act-On (2023a, 2023b) and Adobe (2024) provide insights from industry practice, forecasting that AI will become central to marketing automation, enhancing ROI and campaign precision. These sources affirm that AI-driven marketing strategies deliver value, but also demand new managerial capabilities and infrastructure.

Creativity and Human–AI Collaboration

The synergy between human creativity and AI capabilities remains a central theme in recent scholarship. Chandra & Rahman (2024) develop a conceptual framework for value co-creation, arguing that AI can complement, but not replace, the emotional and intuitive aspects of marketing design. Labib (2024) similarly emphasizes the necessity of preserving human input in areas such as brand storytelling, suggesting that AI excels in data synthesis but lacks cultural and emotional resonance. Jarek & Mazurek (2019) reinforce this argument, presenting AI as a powerful support tool in marketing processes, while warning against overreliance in contexts where authenticity and emotion are vital. Hildebrand (2019) explores how AI affects consumer decision-making by shaping perception, but notes that successful campaigns still rely on human-led messaging and ethical framing.

Ethical and Operational Risks

Despite its benefits, AI in marketing presents a range of ethical and operational risks. Wirth (2018) raises early concerns about data misuse and transparency, which are echoed in more recent studies such as Um et al. (2022), who advocate for standardized trust management in AI deployment. Ratten (2024) and Rerkpichai &

Santhuenkaew (2024) highlight the dangers of algorithmic bias and the potential erosion of consumer trust, particularly in culturally sensitive campaigns. Chintalapati & Pandey (2022) identify a lack of human oversight as a critical failure point in automated marketing, while De Bruyn et al. (2020) warn of overfitting AI models to behavioral patterns that may not generalize. Together, these sources stress the importance of ethical frameworks and human governance in all stages of AI-supported marketing.

Managerial Perspectives and Industry Insights

Several sources explore how marketing professionals perceive and adopt AI tools. According to Alexa et al. (2024), many organizations see AI as an enabler of strategic agility, but implementation challenges persist, especially regarding employee training and system integration. Shaik (2023) reports that while AI improves targeting accuracy and automation, it also introduces complexity in customer relationship management. Act-On (2023a, 2023b) and Adobe (2024) offer insights from industry practitioners, noting a growing demand for hybrid models where AI supports—rather than replaces—marketing teams. Jain et al. (2023) assess the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT in marketing research, concluding that such tools enhance productivity but must be applied with methodological caution. These findings underline the need for a balanced approach that integrates technological innovation with human judgment and organizational values.

Theoretical Background and Conceptual Anchors

Recent scholarship offers several theoretical frameworks that enhance understanding of artificial intelligence (AI) adoption and application in marketing. Among the most prominent is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which explains user intentions toward adopting new technologies based on perceived usefulness and ease of use (Davis, 1989). This model, though initially developed for individual IT users, has also been applied in organizational contexts to evaluate marketing professionals' acceptance of AI tools.

Equally relevant is the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), which redefines marketing as a process of co-creating value rather than delivering static products (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). SDL emphasizes the role of AI not only as a tool but as a co-actor in the co-creation of personalized and interactive customer experiences.

Another useful lens is the Dynamic Capabilities Theory, which highlights a firm's ability to sense, seize, and transform in response to technological change (Teece, 2007). AI adoption in global marketing can be interpreted as a form of dynamic capability, especially when firms leverage it for real-time campaign adaptation across diverse markets.

Finally, the concept of AI-readiness models (e.g., Jarek & Mazurek, 2019) helps to assess organizational and cultural preparedness for AI integration. These models inform our understanding of the heterogeneity among firms in how they integrate AI into campaign design,

strategy, and execution. This paper draws selectively on these frameworks to interpret empirical findings and guide case analysis.

Summary of Key Literature Contributions

To synthesize the diverse perspectives, the following table presents selected sources grouped by area of contribution (Table 2).

analysis; these are articulated through the following propositions. In order to strengthen the logical link between the theoretical framework and the empirical focus of this study, these propositions are formulated as theoretical assumptions (rather than statistical hypotheses) derived from the reviewed literature. They summarize key insights about the interplay between artificial intelligence and human creativity in global marketing communication.

Table 2

Summary of Key Contributions from Selected Literature on AI in Marketing

Source	Focus Area	Key Insight	Limitations
Huang & Rust (2021)	AI typology in marketing	Introduces mechanical, thinking, and feeling AI	Conceptual, no empirical testing
Chintalapati & Pandey (2022)	Systematic review	Maps key AI applications: personalization, engagement	Review-based, not case-driven
Davenport et al. (2020)	Strategic impact	AI reshapes marketing decision-making processes	Requires empirical support
Eriksson et al. (2020)	Strategy formulation	Stresses need for human–AI balance in marketing	Conceptual only
Chandra & Rahman (2024)	Value co-creation	AI enables collaborative experiences with consumers	Theoretical, future-oriented
Feng et al. (2021)	Bibliometric trends	Documents rapid growth in AI-related marketing research	Descriptive, lacks interpretation
Adobe (2024)	Digital marketing trends	Human–AI fusion enhances personalization and ROI	Based on market surveys
Act-On (2023a, b)	Marketing automation	AI increases targeting precision and saves time	Industry-based, not academic
De Bruyn et al. (2020)	Opportunities and risks	Highlights trust, bias, and ethical pitfalls in AI use	Conceptual emphasis
Um et al. (2022)	Standardization and trust	Proposes technical frameworks for AI transparency	Less focus on user perspective
Jarek & Mazurek (2019)	Managerial perspective	AI enables data-driven marketing decisions	Outdated in tools and examples
Labib (2024)	Trends and future outlook	Summarizes innovations and strategic shifts in AI marketing	Broad scope, limited depth
Davis (1989)	Technology adoption	Introduces Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) – perceived ease & usefulness	Doesn't capture emotional/cultural dimensions
Vargo & Lusch (2004)	Service-Dominant Logic	Marketing value emerges from interaction, not goods delivery alone	Abstract, less applicable to AI specifics
Teece (2007)	Dynamic capabilities	Explains how firms adapt and reconfigure to changing environments like AI	High-level theory, needs contextual adaptation

Source: own elaboration based on the reviewed academic and industry literature

Despite the abundance of literature, several inconsistencies remain across existing frameworks. For instance, while Huang and Rust (2021) emphasize technological capacity, Chandra and Rahman (2024) and Jarek and Mazurek (2019) underline the social and managerial dimensions of AI deployment. Yet, the empirical linkage between these strands is rarely articulated. The current study integrates these perspectives by aligning them with the five research questions introduced earlier, thereby transforming a descriptive review into a theoretically informed analytical framework. In doing so, the study proposes an initial set of analytical propositions regarding how AI complements, substitutes, or enhances human creativity in global marketing campaigns.

The theoretical reflections outlined above suggest several conceptual directions that frame the subsequent

Propositions:

P1: Artificial intelligence enhances analytical and operational dimensions of marketing but does not substitute human creativity or intuition.

P2: The emotional and symbolic impact of global marketing campaigns continues to rely primarily on human-led conceptualization and storytelling.

P3: The most effective marketing strategies emerge from a hybrid human–AI collaboration that balances algorithmic precision with cultural and creative depth.

Building upon these propositions, the study addresses the five research questions introduced in the *Introduction* (RQ1–RQ5), linking the theoretical premises to the comparative case analysis that follows.

This synthesis confirms that AI offers immense potential for global marketing but must be contextualized through human insight and local adaptation. The present study addresses the gap between theory and practice through a comparative case analysis

Findings

Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the academic debate by proposing a four-level typology of AI–human collaboration in global marketing campaigns. This framework builds on and extends existing literature on AI typologies (e.g., Huang & Rust, 2021) and helps bridge conceptual gaps by providing a structured, practice-oriented lens through which firms can assess their use of AI in creative processes. It offers a foundation for future empirical testing and comparative analysis across industries and cultural contexts.

The proposed four-level typology of human–AI collaboration extends prior conceptualizations, particularly those of Huang and Rust (2021) and Chandra and Rahman (2024). While Huang and Rust introduced a threefold distinction between mechanical, thinking, and feeling AI, their model focused primarily on the cognitive sophistication of AI systems rather than on the interaction between technology and human creativity. In contrast, our typology introduces a relational perspective: it maps not only the level of algorithmic autonomy but also the degree of human interpretive and cultural input. Compared with Chandra and Rahman’s (2024) framework of value co-creation, our model operationalizes collaboration through four observable dimensions, thus offering a bridge between theoretical abstraction and empirical application. This positioning demonstrates that the typology advances current debates by contextualizing AI–human interaction specifically within global marketing campaign design.

Case Selection and Structure of Analysis

In order to explore the research questions, eight global marketing campaigns were selected based on their international reach, level of AI integration, and relevance to contrasting human and machine-driven creativity. These campaigns vary in industry, geography, and technological maturity. Each case is presented using a four-dimensional framework: (1) the role of AI in campaign design or delivery, (2) the role of human creativity, (3) the technologies or platforms involved, and (4) global reach and outcomes.

Case Study Narratives

To illustrate the proposed typology, the study presents nine representative campaigns that exemplify different configurations of human and AI involvement. These narratives are not reproduced merely for descriptive richness but serve to demonstrate how creative control, data-driven precision, and cultural interpretation interact in global marketing practice. The analytical focus is therefore on patterns and contrasts that illuminate the broader conceptual model. Every global marketing campaign that is remembered and

that moves audiences was born in the heads and hearts of marketers. Even those that rely entirely on technology show how irreplaceable marketers’ ideas and concepts are. It should be emphasized that in all these campaigns the role of technology is essential, but without the ideas of a human/marketer it is just a tool. It should be remembered that a marketing campaign is an organized series of activities related to the promotion of a product, or brand, which are carried out in a specific time and space. The purpose of a marketing campaign is to increase brand awareness, increase sales, build customer loyalty or achieve another specific goal. Marketing campaigns can be implemented using various channels, such as traditional advertising, online advertising, public relations, email marketing, influencer marketing, etc. The main goal of any marketing campaign is to influence specific consumer behavior. Primarily, the idea is to attract the attention of potential customers. A professionally designed and executed marketing campaign can bring tangible benefits to a company, such as increased sales, improved brand image, increased customer loyalty, etc. Therefore, it is important that marketing campaigns are carefully planned and executed with goals and budget in mind, as well as tracked and evaluated for effectiveness.

The following is a choice of global marketing campaigns, the creation of which was made possible by human creation on the one hand, and on the other hand, those that took advantage of the potential that artificial intelligence brings.

The “Think Different” campaign, launched by Apple in 1997 and lasting until 2002, remains one of the most significant achievements in the history of marketing. Conceived under the direction of Steve Jobs and executed by the agency TBWA/Chiat/Day, the campaign symbolically redefined Apple’s identity, emphasizing creativity, innovation, and nonconformity. Initially, Apple collaborated with BBDO on a “We’re back” campaign, but Jobs, dissatisfied with the concept, redirected efforts toward a message that would celebrate creative individuals who change the world.

Craig Tanimoto from TBWA/Chiat/Day proposed the slogan “*Think Different*”, which captured the campaign’s essence. Instead of focusing on product specifications, Apple promoted a lifestyle and mindset that valued imagination and courage. The campaign featured outstanding historical and contemporary figures such as Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Gandhi, Amelia Earhart, Pablo Picasso, and Alfred Hitchcock. Jobs also made the unconventional decision to avoid computer magazines in favor of high-profile outlets such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Forbes*, as well as large-format billboards—an approach that broke existing industry conventions.

Despite initial difficulties in obtaining image rights and selecting the right soundtrack, the campaign became a global success, enhancing Apple’s image as an innovative and visionary company. Its impact extended beyond marketing results: “*Think Different*” positioned Apple as a cultural brand appealing to creative and open-minded audiences. The campaign also contributed to the

commercial success of the colorful iMac line, strengthening Apple's association with innovation and design excellence. The case demonstrates how human creativity and intuition—particularly Jobs's capacity to link cultural symbols with brand identity—remain irreplaceable elements in global marketing. Artificial intelligence could support execution and optimization, but not the kind of emotional and symbolic synthesis that defined the campaign's success (Macminik, 2016).

The *Fearless Girl* campaign (2017), created by State Street Global Advisors, combined artistic symbolism with a powerful social message promoting gender equality and women's representation on corporate boards. The bronze statue, designed by artist Kristen Visbal and placed opposite Wall Street's *Charging Bull*, became an instant cultural phenomenon. Installed on the eve of International Women's Day, it captured global attention and inspired public debate on women's leadership in business. Although initially planned as a temporary installation, the statue's popularity led to its permanent relocation near the New York Stock Exchange in 2018. The campaign successfully merged artistic expression with a corporate initiative, showing that a brand can address social values while strengthening its image and public visibility. The integration of emotional symbolism, artistic expression, and strategic communication exemplifies the irreplaceable role of human creativity and empathy in marketing – dimensions that AI, despite its analytical power, cannot authentically reproduce (The Wall Street Experience, 2022).

Coca-Cola's *Share a Coke* campaign, launched in 2011, revolutionized traditional marketing communication through large-scale personalization. The brand replaced its iconic logo with popular first names and phrases, inviting consumers to “share a Coke” with friends or loved ones. The campaign combined a simple idea with powerful emotional appeal, encouraging user-generated content and social media engagement. By leveraging data and digital promotion, Coca-Cola created a global wave of participation, turning personal bottles into viral content shared under the hashtag #shareacoke. The campaign boosted sales and strengthened emotional attachment to the brand. Its success inspired similar personalization strategies in other companies and proved that individualized engagement could generate measurable commercial results. While AI supported data management and personalization logistics, the creative concept and emotional narrative clearly originated from human insight (Arbo Blog, 2023).

Old Spice transformed its image through the 2010 campaign *The Man Your Man Could Smell Like*, developed by Wieden+Kennedy. Aimed at revitalizing the men's grooming category, the campaign cleverly targeted both male and female audiences by blending humor, irony, and dynamic storytelling. Following its initial success, Old Spice launched an interactive “Response” campaign, producing 186 personalized video replies to online comments within 2.5 days. This innovative use of real-time engagement dramatically increased visibility and sales – by 60% in the first months – and established the brand as a social media pioneer. The campaign's combination of

humor, cultural awareness, and responsiveness showcased the creative agility that remains characteristic of human-driven marketing. AI could optimize performance metrics, but not replicate the improvisational tone or cultural wit that defined Old Spice's success (Wieden+Kennedy, 2010).

The *Most Interesting Man in the World* campaign by Dos Equis, developed with Havas Worldwide, became one of the most iconic advertising efforts in modern history. It revitalized the brand by creating a memorable, charismatic archetype embodying sophistication and adventure. The campaign's humorous storytelling and cultural references captured the imagination of global audiences, turning the character into an enduring internet meme. Despite market challenges, Dos Equis achieved a 22% increase in U.S. sales and tripled performance in Canada. The campaign's longevity reflected its strong narrative construction and emotional resonance, qualities rooted in human creativity and cultural intuition. By blending humor, myth, and identity, the campaign achieved a symbolic authenticity that no algorithmic optimization could reproduce (Daily Brand, 2023).

In 2018, Alibaba launched its global campaign *To the Greatness of Small* in partnership with the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang. Created by BBDO China, the campaign celebrated small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as key drivers of the global economy. Through emotional storytelling and cinematic imagery, Alibaba portrayed athletes and entrepreneurs as symbols of perseverance and ambition, aligning the company's mission with empowerment and inclusion. Distributed globally across platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn, the campaign strengthened Alibaba's international brand visibility and showcased its social values. It also demonstrated how AI-driven data analytics supported the global targeting and optimization of digital content, while the narrative design and emotional coherence remained human-led. The case underlines that human storytelling gives meaning to AI-enabled reach and personalization (Campaigns of the World, 2021).

The above campaigns show that human creativity and the ability to set up authentic, emotional relationships with audiences is invaluable in marketing and advertising. Artificial intelligence can offer tools to support these processes, but deep understanding. The creation of comprehensive global marketing campaigns by artificial intelligence (AI) alone is still a novelty and experiment rather than standard practice. Although AI is increasingly being used to support various aspects of marketing campaigns, such as data analysis, content personalization, automation and campaign optimization, the full design and execution of a global marketing campaign by AI without any human intervention is rare.

However, there are some examples where AI had a significant role in the creative process or campaign execution. Burger King's *Whopper Detour* campaign (2018) exemplified the innovative fusion of technology and creative strategy. Using geolocation technology, the brand offered customers a Whopper for one cent—available only through

the Burger King app when users were near a McDonald's restaurant. This clever provocation, enhanced by social media challenges such as *Unlock the 1-Cent Whopper*, generated viral engagement and a surge in app downloads. AI tools supported the campaign's personalization, real-time optimization, and behavioral targeting. Yet the conceptual brilliance – turning competition into playful engagement – was purely human. The campaign demonstrated how AI can amplify creativity through data-driven precision, but cannot originate the humor or strategic irony that connect emotionally with audiences (Marketing Trendsetters, 2023).

IBM's *The Voice of Art* campaign, launched in Brazil in 2017 in partnership with the Pinacoteca Museum, illustrated how artificial intelligence can facilitate interactive and educational marketing. Using IBM Watson's cognitive system, visitors could "converse" with artworks and receive real-time responses about their history and meaning. Watson was trained on the museum's collection, creating a unique blend of art, technology, and accessibility. The project provided personalized experiences and inclusive features for hearing-impaired visitors. It demonstrated the potential of AI in enhancing cultural engagement while preserving human curation and ethical oversight. The campaign became a landmark example of how AI can enrich human experience rather than replace it (Anacecilia.digital, 2022).

Netflix employs AI as a core component of its global marketing strategy, using machine learning to personalize recommendations, thumbnails, and promotional content. The platform continuously analyses viewer data to predict preferences, segment audiences, and optimize promotional timing. While algorithms enhance efficiency and engagement, human teams remain responsible for the creative side of campaign messaging, visual aesthetics,

and global adaptation. Netflix's case illustrates the peak of AI-led marketing, where automation scales communication but still depends on human cultural oversight to avoid homogenization (Netflix Research, 2024).

Across all nine cases, a clear pattern emerges: artificial intelligence enhances personalization, targeting, and operational scale, yet the *essence of creativity, empathy, and symbolic meaning remains inherently human*. Campaigns such as Apple's *Think Different* and Dos Equis's *Most Interesting Man* demonstrate narrative and emotional depth that no algorithm can reproduce, while hybrid models like *Share a Coke* or *Whopper Detour* illustrate the advantages of AI-human collaboration. Collectively, these examples show that successful global marketing depends on balance—using AI for precision and reach, and human imagination for authenticity and resonance.

Table 3 provides an analytical overview of how companies across sectors apply AI to varying degrees. It reflects a continuum ranging from fully human-driven creativity (e.g., Apple, Dos Equis) to hybrid approaches where AI supports but does not replace decision-making (e.g., Coca-Cola, IBM Watson, Burger King), and to data-centric personalization strategies exemplified by Netflix. A closer comparison reveals that AI-driven campaigns tend to prioritize performance optimization—such as click-through rates or behavioral targeting—whereas human-led initiatives emphasize symbolic communication, emotional connection, and long-term brand equity. For instance, while Netflix leverages AI to customize interfaces and suggestions at the micro level, Apple constructs a global emotional narrative that transcends immediate personalization. The former relies on behavioral data and algorithmic inference; the latter builds on cultural associations and universal values such as simplicity, elegance, or rebellion.

Table 3

Summary of Global Marketing Campaigns Involving AI

Brand / Campaign	Type	AI Involvement	Objective	Human-AI Relationship
Apple – Think Different	Brand repositioning, emotional branding	Low	Change brand image, promote creativity	Human-driven, symbolic storytelling
Fearless Girl – State Street	Public installation, gender equality	None	Promote board diversity	Entirely human, symbolic art
Coca-Cola – Share a Coke	Personalization via packaging	Moderate	Boost emotional connection & sales	Human concept + AI for personalization
Old Spice – Smell Like a Man	Humor-based viral marketing	Low	Rebrand to appeal to women buyers	Creative + real-time human engagement
Dos Equis – Most Interesting Man	Character-based storytelling	None	Rebuild brand identity	Fully human-crafted concept
Alibaba – To the Greatness of Small	Olympic-themed global campaign	Moderate	Support SMEs globally	AI-assisted targeting, human narrative
Burger King – Whopper Detour	Location-based mobile promotion	High	Drive downloads & customer shift	Hybrid – geolocation + creative strategy
IBM Watson – The Voice of Art	Museum experience via AI	High	Interactive art education	AI-driven interaction, human curation
Netflix – Content personalization	Adaptive digital promotion	High	Boost viewer engagement	AI-driven delivery, human content

Source: own elaboration based on campaign documentation and secondary sources, including official websites, marketing case repositories, and media analyses of Apple, Coca-Cola, IBM Watson, Alibaba, Netflix, Old Spice, Dos Equis, Burger King, and Fearless Girl campaigns

Campaigns like Coca-Cola's *Share a Coke* represent a transitional model in which human creative vision guides the use of algorithmic tools. Here, AI amplifies rather than replaces creativity—generating thousands of visual variations or combinations that human designers might not have envisioned. This marks a conceptual shift from a binary “AI versus human” approach toward a continuum of hybrid collaboration. The IBM Watson *Voice of Art* project further illustrates how AI can enhance not only technical performance but also educational and emotional engagement by enabling interactive dialogue between audiences and artworks. This extends beyond operational efficiency into the realm of cultural enrichment, where data-driven systems facilitate immersive experiences.

At the same time, campaigns like Dos Equis and Apple reaffirm the enduring value of human-led creativity, particularly when cultural positioning and brand archetypes are central. In such cases, omitting AI from the creative process may constitute a deliberate strategic choice rather than a technological limitation—a preference for narrative authenticity and emotional depth over algorithmic optimization.

Cross-Case Comparison and Insights

These campaigns demonstrate a spectrum of AI utilization in global marketing. At one end are campaigns like Apple's “Think Different” and Dos Equis' legendary character strategy, where AI plays no role and human storytelling dominates. At the other end, Netflix's recommendation system highlights the strength of algorithms in personalization and content delivery. Burger King's “Whopper Detour” and Coca-Cola's “Share a Coke” combine AI and geolocation/data personalization with strong human-conceived ideas, illustrating a hybrid approach. IBM Watson's art project reveals how AI can engage consumers experientially, yet still rely on human UX design, concept framing, or cultural anchoring.

Relevance to Research Questions

The cases collectively offer insights into all five research questions:

Q1 (Limitations of AI): Apple and Dos Equis reveal that emotionally resonant storytelling remains a human domain; IBM Watson showed challenges in creating emotionally meaningful interaction through AI alone.

Q2 (Advantages of AI): Netflix and IBM Watson demonstrate how AI enhances targeting, personalization, and content-experience alignment.

Q3 (Human superiority areas): Brand identity, emotional design, narrative construction, and cultural sensitivity clearly rely on human creativity, as seen in Apple, Dos Equis, and Coca-Cola.

Q4 (Standardization risks): Netflix uses AI to adapt globally, but risks cultural flattening; this is mitigated by human input in campaign oversight.

Q5 (Best suited areas for AI): Trend analysis, targeting, segmentation, and campaign automation emerge as the most AI-compatible domains.

Key Observations

The analysis confirms that AI excels in the areas of automation, optimization, and mass personalization. However, campaigns that resonate deeply with audiences continue to rely on emotional appeal, cultural relevance, and storytelling—domains where human marketers demonstrate clear superiority. The most successful global marketing efforts are those that integrate the efficiency of AI with the authenticity of human expression.

Discussion

This article contributes to the literature by proposing a refined model of human–AI collaboration, expanding on the Huang & Rust (2021) typology. By incorporating emotional and cultural dimensions into AI strategy, the model offers a holistic framework that bridges the gap between technology-driven optimization and narrative-driven branding.

The analyzed campaigns confirm that artificial intelligence is playing an increasingly central role in global marketing, particularly in areas requiring precision, data analysis, and real-time personalization. However, they also reveal clear boundaries for algorithmic decision-making, especially when emotions, cultural sensitivity, or brand storytelling are involved. A cross-case comparison suggests that optimal marketing outcomes are most often achieved through hybrid strategies that integrate the strengths of both AI and human input. This supports the emerging academic consensus on the concept of *AI augmentation* rather than full automation.

A Typology of Human–AI Collaboration in Global Campaigns

Based on the case studies, the following four-level typology of collaboration is proposed:

Level 1: Human-Led Campaigns (No AI Involvement) – Brand stories are entirely conceived, executed, and emotionally framed by human teams. These campaigns rely on cultural sensitivity, symbolic messaging, and storytelling grounded in human experience.

Examples: Apple's “Think Different,” Dos Equis' “The Most Interesting Man in the World”.

Level 2: Human-Centered Campaigns Enhanced by Data and Technology – The creative vision is human-led, but selected AI or digital tools support execution, such as targeting, delivery, or personalization.

Examples: Coca-Cola's “Share a Coke” (name-based personalization), Burger King's “Whopper Detour” (geolocation-based offers).

Level 3: AI-Facilitated Interaction with Human Framing – AI systems generate real-time content or interaction, while humans guide conceptual design, ethics, and user experience.

Example: IBM Watson's “The Voice of Art” (AI-driven engagement in museum spaces).

Level 4: Algorithm-Led Personalization at Scale – AI plays a dominant role in content selection, customization, and timing, with human involvement mostly limited to strategic oversight.

Example: Netflix's campaign optimization through viewing data and algorithmic recommendations.

This model illustrates how marketing organizations can decide the appropriate degree of AI integration depending on campaign objectives, industry characteristics, and target audience expectations. Rather than a binary choice between human and artificial intelligence, the framework shows a continuum of hybrid strategies, where both forces can complement each other across different levels of creative and operational intensity.

Addressing the Research Questions through Comparative Analysis

The empirical material supports the following conclusions regarding the five guiding research questions:

RQ1: AI's limitations are most evident in areas demanding emotional resonance and deep cultural sensitivity. These are best handled by human creatives.

RQ2: AI's strengths lie in operational scale, real-time analysis, and cost-effective targeting. This is especially effective in digital environments with large data pools.

RQ3: Human superiority is evident in narrative development, humor, ethics, and long-term brand building.

RQ4: Risks of standardization are real but manageable through human editorial control and localized adaptations.

RQ5: AI's optimal application areas include segmentation, A/B testing, content timing, dynamic pricing, and consumer profiling.

Theoretical Reflections – Balancing Automation and Imagination

From a theoretical standpoint, the relationship between AI and creativity can be situated within the broader tension between standardization and differentiation. While AI excels at optimizing for efficiency and measurable performance (Huang & Rust, 2021), it does not inherently create meaning. Drawing from Stern (2006), Holt (2004), and Escalas and Bettman (2005), marketing can be understood as a meaning-making and narrative process—thus, human interpretation and semiotic sensibility remain irreplaceable.

Furthermore, academic models such as the AI Maturity Curve (Chui et al., 2018) or the Cognitive-Affective Model of Creativity (Martindale, 1999) emphasize the need for co-existence. High-performing organizations gradually shift from AI-assisted to AI-augmented models, while retaining human agency over narrative coherence, ethics, and cultural resonance.

Managerial Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for marketing executives considering AI in global campaigns:

Combine AI with local cultural expertise – Use algorithms to identify opportunities but involve human teams in final content design.

Avoid full automation in brand storytelling – Authentic emotional engagement still depends on human creativity.

Implement AI ethics protocols – Ensure transparency, consent, and fairness in automated decisions.

Invest in hybrid teams – Foster collaboration between data scientists and creatives for balanced campaign execution.

Pilot AI tools in diverse markets before global rollout – Prevent unintended cultural missteps.

Integrate brand values into AI strategy – Ensure that algorithmic optimization aligns with core brand identity.

While the above recommendations provide general guidance, their application should consider sector-specific and cultural contexts. For instance, technology-intensive sectors such as streaming or e-commerce may prioritize algorithmic personalization, whereas luxury and heritage brands should emphasize narrative authenticity and symbolic communication. In emerging markets, where digital infrastructure and consumer trust vary, hybrid AI-human models can mitigate risks of cultural misalignment or over-standardization. These nuanced implications highlight the need for adaptive managerial strategies rather than universal prescriptions.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

Based on the analysis, this article proposes a model of human–AI collaboration in global marketing campaigns. The model outlines four core phases—insight, strategy, execution, and optimization—each with complementary contributions from AI and human actors (Table 4).

Table 4
Roles of Artificial Intelligence and Human Input
Across Campaign Phases

Phase	AI Role	Human Role
Insight	Data analysis, segmentation	Interpretation, priority setting
Strategy	Scenario simulation	Vision, brand voice, creative brief
Execution	Automation, targeting	Creative assets, storytelling
Optimization	Performance tracking, A/B testing	Adjustment, emotional resonance

Source: own elaboration based on comparative insights from global marketing campaigns and AI-assisted strategy literature

This framework emphasizes synergy rather than substitution and suggests that future marketing success will depend on an intelligent integration of both forces.

Limitations and Future Research

As with any qualitative study based on case analysis, this research has limitations. First, the selection of eight campaigns, while diverse, is not exhaustive. There may be additional industry-specific or regional dynamics not captured here. Second, the article does not rely on primary data, such as interviews or consumer surveys, which could offer deeper insight into user perception of AI-driven campaigns.

Future research could pursue several avenues. Longitudinal studies of AI integration in marketing

departments could shed light on organizational learning. Cross-cultural analyses of consumer responses to AI personalization would also be valuable. Finally, more critical inquiry is needed into the societal impacts of automated persuasion, especially as AI becomes increasingly autonomous in decision-making processes.

Moreover, since this study relies exclusively on secondary data, issues of validity and bias must be acknowledged. Information derived from corporate and media sources may reflect promotional narratives rather than objective evaluations. Although triangulation helped mitigate this risk, future research should incorporate primary data—such as interviews with marketing professionals or consumers—to enhance the credibility and depth of interpretation.

Conclusions

Artificial intelligence is transforming the landscape of global marketing by enabling brands to better understand, segment, and engage consumers. However, the technology is not a replacement for human creativity. Instead, AI should be viewed as a powerful assistant—capable of enhancing efficiency, personalization, and reach, but still dependent on human insight to ensure emotional connection and cultural alignment. Unlike prior work that isolates AI capabilities from creative strategy, this article integrates both, offering a comprehensive framework for hybrid campaign design. The typology and comparative analysis enable both scholars and practitioners to better understand the nuances of human–AI synergy in global marketing contexts.

This article has demonstrated that a nuanced, hybrid approach combining AI capabilities with human expertise delivers the most effective global marketing campaigns. As the technology evolves, further research will be needed to explore new forms of collaboration, ethical implications, and long-term brand impacts.

The findings also emphasize the need for a more integrated research agenda that links theoretical exploration with empirical evidence from diverse markets. By aligning conceptual propositions with real-world marketing dynamics, future scholarship can contribute not only to advancing marketing theory but also to shaping responsible and human-centered AI practices in the global business environment.

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