Gartner

Gartner Marketing Predictions

5 actionable insights for what's next in social, AI, analog, truth and trust in 2024 and beyond

CMOs discover human opportunity in a world changed by AI

Marketing leaders are bracing for an AI-powered future. AI will radically reshape social media and search landscapes, creative work, brand positioning and perceptions of truth.

Here are five marketing predictions from Gartner experts that offer a perspective on the opportunity created by social media's decay, an AI-free approach to communicating brand value and the myriad ways in which generative AI (GenAI) will change the landscape of everything from search behavior to staffing considerations.

CMOs can use these predictions to:

- ☑ Establish GenAI upskilling for in-house creatives
- ☑ Invest in cross-functional teams to ensure all brand content adheres to guidelines
- ☑ Refocus customer acquisition and loyalty strategies to offset social media attrition
- ☑ Audit and test how AI-free experiences impact brand engagement
- ☑ Develop unique branded research to ensure mentions in GenAI search

Prediction No. 1

AI will increase creative talent spending, not reduce it

By 2026, 80% of advanced creative roles will be tasked with harnessing GenAI to achieve differentiated results, requiring CMOs to spend more on talent.

The evidence

More than half of marketing teams (64%) are already leveraging AI to create campaigns. However, initial digital experiences created with the help of GenAI are lackluster. This demonstrates the need for a more strategic approach to help in-house and outsourced talent explore new ways to adopt GenAI to enhance their work.

The impact

GenAI will expand creative possibilities by enabling the development of more concepts and creative variations. This will increase CMO spending on agency and in-house creative talent who will focus on more strategic endeavors and orchestrating new ways of using GenAI to stay ahead of the competition.

The opportunity

- Upskill in-house creatives to use GenAI responsibly to augment their work.
- Update job descriptions and career pathing for future GenAI- enabled creative talent.
- Experiment using GenAI for creative briefs, ideation, cross-functional conversation facilitation and concept visualization.

Take action

Start upskilling employees with GenAI piloting

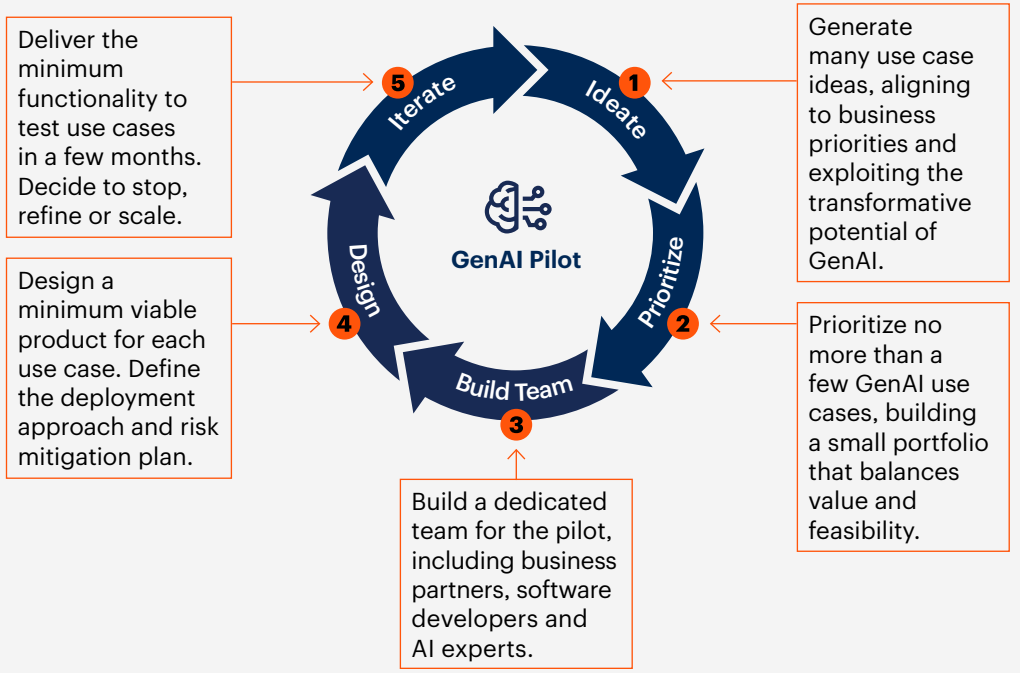
Explore GenAI piloting with applications, including:

- **Text generators** to create copy, news stories, job descriptions and short-form content like subject lines for A/B testing
- **Images generation** for logos and human models altered for different poses, aging and other aspects
- **Video creation** to showcase event highlights, immersive product experiences and multilingual versions
- **Avatars and virtual influencers** to engage customers on social, and in the metaverse, and to provide customer support

"Identify use cases where you can effectively deploy GenAI today to support the needs of your business and employees and drive future transformation."

Nicole Greene, Gartner VP Analyst

Generative AI pilot cycle



Source: Gartner

Prediction No. 2

CMOs will guard brands against deception unleashed by GenAI

By 2026, 60% of CMOs will adopt measures such as content authenticity technology, enhanced monitoring and brand-endorsed UGC to protect their brands from widespread deception unleashed by GenAI.

The evidence

Fifty-five percent of brand reputation leaders are concerned about the risks associated with GenAI, yet only 21% of organizations have in-depth guidance on how people outside of the organization can use GenAI in a way that causes reputation risks.

The impact

To safeguard their brands, organizations must prioritize the implementation of content authenticity measures and establish responsible use guidelines for GenAI. The lack of existing frameworks and best practices necessitates transparency and trust-building mechanisms, compelling brands to demand clear policies from vendors and agency partners, while integrating content authenticity features into technology.

The opportunity

- Invest in cross-functional responsible use and content authenticity teams to ensure content, activities and technology adhere to guidelines.
- Manage business and consumer risk of GenAI-generated content as adoption increases.
- Curate user-generated content (UGC) to improve discovery, trust and engagement.

Take action

Bolster brand trust through user-generated content

Over 80% of consumers reported that UGC improves product discovery, brand trust and experience. Plus UGC can help marketing leaders meet customers' demand for authenticity (a value that ranked third most important by U.S. consumers in 2022). But its potential to provide benefits across other digital channels besides social is often overlooked.

To integrate UGC across digital channels, marketing leaders should:

- Ensure UGC integration efforts support marketing objectives across channels, and position UGC as an easy-to-use content type
- Assess your organizational capabilities, like the ability to comply with applicable regulations and UGC moderation processes
- Ensure that UGC integration efforts complement your brand's digital channel investments

"CMOs must establish guidelines for GenAI use and create content that is differentiated, unique and brand aligned. Brand-endorsed UGC is one content 'type' that is those things."

Suzanne Schwartz, Gartner Senior Director Analyst

"Authenticity" ranks as third highest value U.S. consumers identify with

Rank	Value
1	Equity
2	Loyalty
3	**Authenticity**
4	Courtesy
5	Success
6	Justice
7	Responsibility
8	Honesty
9	Conscience
10	Happiness

Source: Gartner

Prediction No. 3

One-half of consumers will significantly limit interactions on social media

By 2025, a perceived decay in the quality of social media sites will push 50% of consumers to significantly limit their use of major platforms.

The evidence

Fifty-three percent of consumers believe the current state of social media has decayed compared to either the prior year or to five years ago. The spread of misinformation, toxic user bases and the prevalence of fake accounts/bots were top reasons listed for this perceived decay.

The impact

Consumer concern over GenAI spreading misinformation on social platforms remains high. Over 70% of consumers expect AI to negatively impact social channels. Many social channels have already begun to incorporate AI, which has the potential to hasten the perception of diminished quality and consumer abandonment.

The opportunity

- Monitor consumer concerns on a channel-by-channel basis.
- Determine which social channels to maintain investment in.
- Refocus customer acquisition and loyalty retention strategies to channels beyond social media.

Take action

Create a differentiated loyalty program to offset declining social media usage

In 2022, consumers belonged to an average of 16.6 loyalty programs. However, despite the popularity of these programs, 22% of consumers say it is harder today for brands to keep their loyalty. This represents a six-percentage-point increase since 2022.

The answer? Differentiate your loyalty programs from competitor programs by adding experiential benefits to drive deeper customer engagement. Integrating experiential benefits (e.g., priority service and personalized offers) into the program mix rather than just offering transactional benefits (e.g., redeemable points, discounts) improves customer engagement beyond purchasing behavior.

"Social media advertising is an indispensable tool in the marketing leader's kit, but not the only one. Keep an eye on emerging platforms, but invest in content marketing and opportunities to connect directly with your audience, like loyalty programs, to head off social media's declining reach and impact."

Mike Froggatt, Gartner Senior Director Analyst

Examples of transactional and experiential benefits

Transactional Benefits	Points per dollar spent
	Accelerators for buying specific categories or volume
	Discounts based on points accumulated
	Free products for achieving a spend threshold or number of purchases
Experiential Benefits	Early access
	Priority service
	Preferred access to experiences or events (e.g., new launches or sales)
	Personalized offers

Source: Gartner

Prediction No. 4

“Acoustic brands” will differentiate themselves as AI-free

By 2027, 20% of brands will lean into positioning and differentiation predicated on the absence of AI in their business and products.

The evidence

Seventy-two percent of consumers believe AI-based content generators could spread false or misleading information. Consumers also have serious concerns about AI related to content bias, discrimination, security risks, jobs and other issues.

The impact

With more AI prevalence in marketing, addressing consumer trust and confidence issues will be a significant challenge. A segment of customers may seek out AI-free acoustic brands that prioritize authenticity and ethics. Brands that embrace acoustic positioning can differentiate themselves and potentially target premium or safety-focused markets.

The opportunity

- Identify where customers are most wary of AI-powered experiences and content to determine potential brand-damaging risks.
- Be clear, cautious and strategic about customer-facing AI and where AI will be beneficial in enabling operations versus customer-facing experiences.
- Test how acoustic positioning and AI-free experiences impact customer engagement and behavior.

Take action

Align GenAI practices with consumer expectations

Consumer awareness of AI-based content generators and perceptions of use create brand trust concerns and reputational risk, regardless of actual use cases.

CMOs who use GenAI for content creation and other tasks must anticipate changing consumer perceptions:

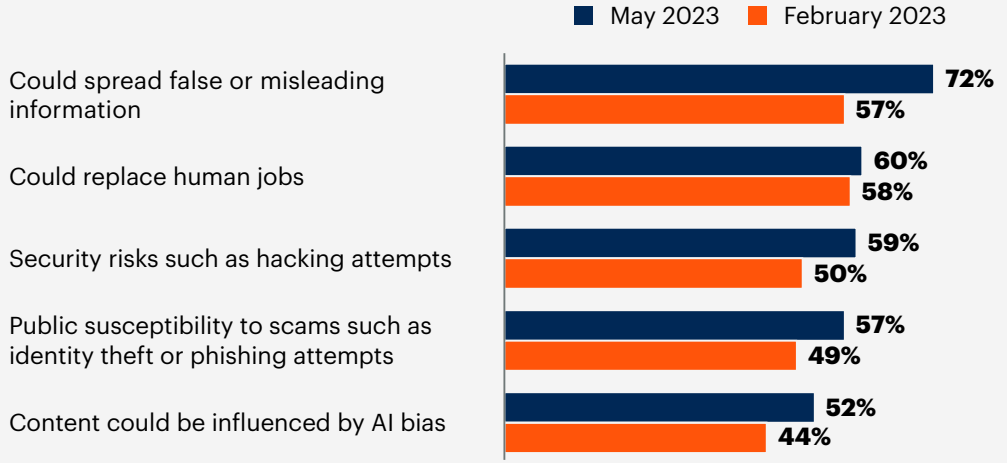
- Stay ahead of consumer and public opinion on these topics as part of efforts to protect brand reputation.
- Work with cross-functional partners to adopt GenAI best practices that protect customer data and intellectual property.
- Anticipate additional consumer scrutiny of GenAI practices within financial, legal or healthcare industries.
- Start with limited trials and ensure visibility into the organization's GenAI policies and controls.

"AI has amplified customer concerns about brand authenticity, transparency and trust."

Chris Ross, Gartner VP Analyst

Top 5 consumer concerns about widespread use of AI-based content generators

Percentage of respondents



n = 305 respondents (May); 320 respondents (February)
Q: Which of the following, if any, would you be concerned about widespread use of AI-based content generators like ChatGPT? Please select any that you consider to be a concern.
Source: Gartner Consumer Community (15-23 May 2023, 10-17 February 2023)

Prediction No. 5

AI will reduce brand visibility in search engine results pages (SERPs)

By 2028, brands' organic search traffic will decrease by 50% or more as consumers embrace GenAI-powered search.

The evidence

Search Generative Experience (SGE), a GenAI Q&A form, takes the top organic position in over 90% of popular search queries and almost half of consumers prefer SGE over traditional search results. The Gartner Digital IQ Index also identified that brands experienced a 9.5% decline in organic site traffic this year.

The impact

Expansion of GenAI in search engines, including Google and Bing, will reduce organic search traffic for brands. CMOs must prepare for the disruption to revenue and lead generation by adapting channel investments and focusing on conversion-focused keywords, gated content and potentially repositioning traditional channels like email.

The opportunity

- Use unique branded content to maximize search mentions.
- Highlight brand credibility with audience-centric content.
- Optimize on-site modular content with metadata that enables search engine bot scraping.
- Test channels like advertorial or mobile marketing to diversify customer acquisition and retention.

Take action

Create an effective search marketing strategy

The Gartner Digital IQ Index found that top brands outperform in nonbranded visibility because they better understand customers' search behavior and deliver content that educates, guides and satiates their demands.

Google Search's "helpful content system" encourages brands to create helpful, reliable, people-first content, rather than search-engine-first content. As a result of their optimized on-site content, top brands are increasingly identified as a trusted and strong source of information by Google.

Use the Gartner Digital IQ Index to understand how peers across categories develop best-in-class search marketing strategies.

"Search is at an inflection point. Marketing leaders must prepare for the disruption that GenAI-powered search features will bring."

Brad Jashinsky, Gartner Analyst

Elements of an effective search marketing strategy

- Allow consumers' needs to guide content creation and boost search visibility.
- Be agile and refresh your paid keyword list regularly.
- Secure brand presence with optimized branded organic ownership and paid visibility.

Source: Gartner

How Gartner is helping marketing leaders adapt and stay ahead

The decisions marketing leaders make today can impact their organization's business outcomes and brand for years to come. It's critical to have trusted support. With our insights, actionable tools and advice, we help marketing leaders adapt their strategies across a variety of mission-critical priorities to set up their organizations for success.

Diagnostics and benchmarks

Guides and toolkits

Expert inquiry

Expert research

In-person events

Peer connections

Case studies and best practices

Live webinars and online learning events

Document reviews

For Gartner clients only

Illustrative key initiative support you receive as a Gartner client:

Diagnose current state

Identify emerging AI technologies and potential marketing use cases via the Hype Cycle for Digital Marketing.

Leverage the Interactive Data Story: Gartner's 2023 Marketing Technology Survey to visualize and benchmark your own Martech stack against industry peers.

Talk with a Gartner expert to review the brands in your industry ranked "Genius" on the Gartner Digital IQ Index and how your organization compares.

Develop your plan

Leverage the Use-Case Prism: Generative AI for Marketing to help guide prioritization and investment decisions in marketing related to AI.

Meet with a Gartner Executive Partner to discuss obstacles and opportunities on piloting GenAI and upskilling your team.

Unlock what lies ahead for marketing in 2024 and beyond by watching Gartner 2024 Marketing Predictions: Build Consumer Trust, and Exploit GenAI.

Execute and drive change

Review your customer acquisition and loyalty strategies with a Gartner expert to boost retention marketing effectiveness and offset future disruptions.

Start building a GenAI-enabled team using Marketing Talent Trends: What CMOs Should Hire and Upskill Their Teams On.

Use our Ignition Guide to Scenario Planning in Times of Disruption to increase the ability to adapt and respond successfully.

Actionable, objective insight

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for marketing leaders:

Webinar

Gartner 2024 Marketing Predictions: Build Consumer Trust, and Exploit GenAI

Join a panel of Gartner experts to explore what lies ahead for marketing in the wake of GenAI.

Watch Now

Research

The 2024 CMO Leadership Vision

Explore CMO priorities, trends and strategic actions to focus on in 2024 and beyond.

Download Now

Conference

Gartner Marketing Symposium/Xpo™

The World's Most Important Gathering of CMOs and Marketing Executives™

View Calendar

Journal

The Chief Marketing Officer Journal

Stay up to date on the latest trends impacting marketing and best practices from the world's top organizations.

Download Now

Already a client?
Get access to even more resources in your client portal. Log In

Connect With Us

Get actionable, objective insight that drives smarter decisions and stronger performance on your mission-critical priorities. Contact us to become a client:

U.S.: 1 855 811 7593

International: +44 (0) 3330 607 044

Become a Client

Learn more about Gartner for Marketing Leaders
gartner.com/en/marketing

Stay connected to the latest insights

© 2023 Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. CM_GBS_2518701

Gartner®