

Artificial Intelligence, Marketing Communication and the Gig Economy: Intersections, Implications and Emerging Work Dynamics

INTELIGÊNCIA ARTIFICIAL, COMUNICAÇÃO DE MARKETING E ECONOMIA GIG: INTERSEÇÕES, IMPLICAÇÕES E DINÂMICAS EMERGENTES DO TRABALHO

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This article examines the convergence of artificial intelligence (AI), marketing communication, and gig economy labor dynamics, highlighting the importance of understanding how automation shapes contemporary labor markets. As a theoretical-empirical study grounded in questionnaire data, the investigation aims to answer the following research question: how does the use of artificial intelligence in marketing communication relate to the algorithmic control mechanisms that structure gig work? The methodology combines a quantitative approach, conducted through a survey of 73 marketing professionals and AI specialists in Poland, with a systematic theoretical review of algorithmic management and informality. The results reveal that, while AI is perceived as an essential tool for personalization and efficiency in brand communication, the same algorithmic infrastructures underpin mechanisms of control and precarity in the gig economy. The study concludes that technology operates as a dual mechanism, simultaneously serving as a vector of organizational efficiency and an apparatus of control over digital platform workers. The study contributes an unprecedented interdisciplinary perspective by connecting algorithmic marketing communication to data-mediated informal work.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence. Marketing communication. Gig economy. Algorithmic management. Digital labor markets.

Este artigo examina a convergência entre inteligência artificial (IA), comunicação de marketing e as dinâmicas do trabalho na economia gig, destacando a relevância de compreender como a automação molda o mercado laboral contemporâneo. Como estudo teórico-empírico fundamentado em dados coletados em questionário, a investigação busca responder à seguinte questão de pesquisa: como o uso da inteligência artificial na comunicação de marketing se relaciona com os mecanismos de controle algorítmico que estruturam o trabalho na economia gig? A metodologia combina uma abordagem quantitativa, realizada por meio de pesquisa com 73 profissionais de marketing e especialistas em IA na Polônia, com uma revisão teórica sistemática sobre gestão algorítmica e informalidade. Os resultados revelam que, embora a IA seja percebida como uma ferramenta essencial para a personalização e eficiência na comunicação de marca, as mesmas infraestruturas algorítmicas sustentam mecanismos de controle e precariedade na economia gig. Conclui-se que a tecnologia opera como um mecanismo dual, atuando simultaneamente como vetor de eficiência organizacional e aparato de controle sobre os trabalhadores de plataformas digitais. O estudo contribui com uma perspectiva interdisciplinar inédita ao conectar a comunicação mercadológica algorítmica ao trabalho informal mediado por dados.

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Palavras-chave: Inteligência artificial. Comunicação de marketing. Economia gig. Gestão algorítmica. Mercados de trabalho digital.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid diffusion of artificial intelligence (AI) across business functions has transformed the way organizations communicate with their audiences, allocate work, and manage performance (Ganesan, 2024; Mandapuram *et al.*, 2023). Marketing, as one of the most data-intensive and consumer-facing disciplines, was among the first sectors to integrate AI tools, ranging from predictive analytics and audience segmentation to automated content generation and chatbot-mediated customer interaction (Chandra *et al.*, 2021; Peruchini, Silva & Teixeira, 2024). At the same time, the rise of the gig economy, characterized by on-demand, platform-mediated, and algorithmically managed work, has restructured employment relations, blurring the boundaries between formal employment, self-employment, and informality (Woodcock & Graham, 2020). This restructuring is captured by the concept of the “entrepreneurialization of informality” proposed by Vaclavik and Oltramari (2022), who show how large companies mediate informal labor through digital platforms while simultaneously imposing formal mechanisms of control.

These two trajectories, the transformation of marketing by AI and the platformization of work, are rarely examined together, despite growing calls in the human resource management literature to connect algorithmic management research across organizational functions (Duggan *et al.*, 2020). Yet they share a common technological substrate: the digital platform and its underlying algorithmic architecture. Platforms that deploy AI for marketing communication (tracking behavioral data, generating personalized content, conducting real-time ad targeting) simultaneously create the conditions under which gig workers operate, and are evaluated, managed, rewarded, and disciplined by the same algorithmic systems, described by Kellogg, Valentine and Christin (2020) as a “6 Rs” logic of restricting, recommending, rating, recording, rewarding, and replacing. This overlap has been documented empirically on ride-hailing platforms, where drivers rated on passenger satisfaction are subject to the same computational logic of tracking, scoring, and behavioral nudging that also drives AI-powered marketing communication (Rezende, Tessarini Junior & Amorim, 2025).

In this digital ecosystem, artificial intelligence functions as a pivotal organizational surrogate for traditional managerial hierarchies, intensifying workplace surveillance, metrics-driven control, and structural precariousness (Frogeri *et al.*, 2026). This shift establishes a complex triadic relationship among platforms, consumers, and gig workers, where non-transparent algorithmic management deeply influences worker behavior and organizational outcomes (Rabban & Singh, 2026).

This article bridges these two domains by asking: how does the use of artificial intelligence in marketing communication relate to the algorithmic control mechanisms that structure gig work? To answer this question, the study combines two sources of evidence. First, a survey of 73 marketing and AI professionals in Poland documents how AI is used in marketing communication and brand posting. Second, a theoretical review of the gig economy literature, centered on the concept of “entrepreneurialization of informality” (Vaclavik & Oltramari, 2022), research on algorithmic HR management (Rezende, Tessarini Junior & Amorim, 2025), and the discussion of employability and human capital in platform work (Araújo, Moreira & Furtado, 2022), provides the conceptual lens used to

interpret these findings. The central thesis is that AI in marketing does not merely optimize communication processes: it also constitutes and expands the infrastructure of algorithmic control that characterizes gig work platforms.

This problem is not only conceptual: it is also a matter of active regulatory debate. This study's attempt to connect technological advancement in marketing to digital labor dynamics aligns with contemporary comprehensive frameworks analyzing the evolution, structural redefinitions, and state of the art of the European and global platform economy (Castanho *et al.*, 2026; Frogeri *et al.*, 2026), which document how regulators are only beginning to grapple with algorithmic systems that simultaneously address consumers and workers.

The article proceeds as follows: Section 2 reviews the theoretical landscape connecting AI, marketing communication, and gig economy dynamics. Section 3 describes the research methodology. Section 4 presents and discusses the results of the empirical research in dialogue with gig economy theory. Section 5 offers concluding remarks and directions for future research.

Artificial Intelligence and Marketing Communication

Artificial intelligence has become a foundational technology in contemporary marketing, enabling organizations to process and act on consumer data at a scale and speed unattainable through manual analysis (Mandapuram *et al.*, 2023; Ganesan, 2024). AI facilitates the analysis of vast behavioral datasets to deliver personalized, timely, and contextually relevant communications, capabilities that traditional marketing channels cannot replicate at scale. From customer segmentation and predictive analytics to natural language processing-powered chatbots and automated content generation, AI enables what scholars describe as a shift from “broadcast” to “dialogic” communication (Chandra *et al.*, 2021; Peruchini, Silva & Teixeira, 2024).

At its core, AI marketing communication relies on machine learning algorithms, supervised, unsupervised, and reinforcement learning, that process consumer behavioral data to identify patterns, predict preferences, and generate outputs (Sarker, 2021; Mohammed, Khan & Bashier, 2016). These outputs may be product recommendations, personalized email campaigns, dynamic pricing ad bids, or chatbot responses. Crucially, the same algorithmic infrastructure that produces marketing outputs also produces data about consumer and worker behavior, creating feedback loops that are iteratively refined over time (Ganesan, 2024; Mandapuram *et al.*, 2023).

The Gig Economy and Digital Labor Markets

The gig economy refers to labor markets characterized by independent contracting mediated by digital platforms, in which fixed employment relations are replaced by a structure of on-demand, task-based engagement (Woodcock & Graham, 2020, p. 10). Platform companies such as Uber, iFood, Rappi, and Upwork constitute what Vaclavik and Oltramari (2022) term “digital labor markets” (DLMs): markets that connect labor supply and demand via algorithmic systems, operating under low regulatory barriers and incorporating characteristics of informality while imposing formal mechanisms of control.

Vaclavik and Oltramari (2022) advance the concept of “entrepreneurialization of informality”, arguing that large multinational corporations are using digital platforms to mediate informal work at scale, creating a new labor status that blends characteristics of formal work (control, performance evaluation, financial incentives) and informal work (autonomous status, absence of employment ties, individual risk assumption). This concept has been empirically corroborated by research on algorithmic HR management in the Brazilian gig economy (Rezende *et al.*, 2025), which found that platform algorithms exercise control through three primary mechanisms: work assignment, remuneration, and performance management.

As documented by Rezende *et al.* (2025) through interviews with ride-hailing drivers in São Paulo, algorithmic management operates through a logic of opacity and behavioral shaping. Workers are simultaneously monitored and incentivized through gamification mechanisms, dynamic pricing, bonuses, and performance ratings, while the criteria governing these mechanisms remain deliberately obscure. The result is what Rosenblat and Stark (2016) term “soft control”: an effective and relentless form of management that operates through fear of punishment and information asymmetry, rather than direct supervision.

Araújo *et al.* (2022) extend this analysis through the lens of human capital theory and employability, arguing that the gig economy creates structural conditions that undermine workers’ capacity to invest in and develop human capital, a prerequisite for sustainable employability. The commodification of work through algorithmic performance metrics reduces workers to interchangeable inputs, while the individualization of risk transfers the costs of training, equipment, and insurance to the worker. In the context of AI-driven platforms, these dynamics intensify: a worker’s value is mediated not by direct human assessment, but by algorithmic performance scores that may embed biases related to race, gender, and geography (Silva & Kenney, 2019; Rezende *et al.*, 2025).

METHOD

This article employs a mixed theoretical-empirical approach, combining a quantitative survey on the use of artificial intelligence in marketing communication with a systematic theoretical review of gig economy scholarship. The two components are integrated through a complementary triangulation logic (Dibekulu, 2020): the survey provides empirical evidence on how AI is used and perceived in marketing practice, while the theoretical review supplies the conceptual apparatus later used, in the Results and Discussion section, to interpret those data in relation to gig-economy labor dynamics.

Empirical component

The theoretical component draws on a systematic literature review of the gig economy, focusing on three key analytical contributions: the concept of “entrepreneurialization of informality” developed by Vaclavik and Oltramari (2022); research on algorithmic HR management and transparency conducted by Rezende, Tessarini Junior and Amorim (2025) with gig workers in the metropolitan region of São Paulo, Brazil; and the theoretical essay on employability in the gig economy and human capital by Araújo, Moreira and Furtado (2022). These three Brazilian contributions were selected because they offer the most theoretically developed accounts of the interface between digital platforms,

algorithms, and labor dynamics available in the Portuguese-language management literature.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire with five closed-ended questions, administered to 73 respondents across several Polish cities (primarily Dąbrowa Górnicza and Warsaw) between April 4 and April

11, 2025 (Valizada, 2025).

It is important to state clearly, from the outset, the composition of this sample: the 73 respondents are marketing professionals, AI specialists, and other corporate practitioners who work with the design, adoption, or oversight of AI systems in organizational settings. They are corporate and technical users of AI technology, not gig economy workers subject to algorithmic management. The questionnaire therefore captures how these professionals perceive and experience AI adoption in marketing, not the first-person, lived experience of platform workers evaluated, incentivized, or disciplined by algorithmic systems. This distinction is central to how the survey findings are read in the Results and Discussion section: they are placed in dialogue with, rather than presented as direct evidence about, the gig-worker experiences documented in prior empirical research on ride-hailing platforms (Rezende, Tessarini Junior & Amorim, 2025).

Table 1 reproduces the questionnaire in full, as originally administered by Valizada (2025), including the closed response options offered for each question.

Table 1. Survey questionnaire administered to respondents (Valizada, 2025)

Nr.	Question	Response options
1	Why is artificial intelligence necessary in marketing communication?	Resulting in better marketing results; It makes effective and customized consumer interaction possible; Automated procedures and streamlines; Others
2	How does artificial intelligence influence brand posting?	Cost efficiency; Making hyper-individualized content possible; Others
3	How do you rate the use of artificial intelligence in marketing communication in your company?	Excellent; Very good; Good; Fair; Poor
4	What challenges does your company face in the use of artificial intelligence in advertising, marketing communication, and brand posting?	Data privacy and security; Integration and system compatibility; Ethical considerations; Others
5	Is the future of artificial intelligence bright?	Yes; No; I am not sure

Source: elaborated by the authors based on Valizada (2025).

Each question aligns with one component of the study's objective. Questions 1 and 2 address the perceived need for, and applications of, AI in marketing communication and brand posting, providing the empirical basis for examining AI as a communication technology. Question 3 captures organizations' self-assessed maturity in AI adoption. Question 4 addresses the challenges of AI adoption, which this article reads through the lens of algorithmic opacity and control documented in the gig economy literature (Vaclavik & Oltramari, 2022; Rezende, Tessarini Junior & Amorim, 2025). Question 5 captures respondents' outlook on the future of AI, which this article connects to the emerging

regulatory debate on platform work (Castanho *et al.*, 2026; Katterbauer *et al.*, 2026). Table 2 details the theoretical contributions used to interpret each question.

Table 2. Questionnaire variables and their theoretical support

Questionnaire variable	What it captures	Theoretical support
Q1 – Need for AI in marketing communication	Reasons professionals cite for adopting AI in brand communication (personalization, efficiency, automation)	Chandra <i>et al.</i> (2021); Mandapuram <i>et al.</i> (2023)
Q2 – Influence of AI on brand posting	Concrete uses of AI in content generation, targeting, and audience engagement	Peruchini, Silva & Teixeira (2024); Ganesan (2024)
Q3 – Organizational assessment of AI adoption	Respondents' evaluation of how well their organization has incorporated AI (from “excellent” to “poor”)	Araújo, Moreira & Furtado (2022)
Q4 – Challenges of AI adoption	Data privacy and security, systems integration and compatibility, and ethical considerations reported by respondents	Vaclavik & Oltramari (2022); Rezende, Tessarini Junior & Amorim (2025); Weippl & Schrittwieser (2023)
Q5 – Outlook on the future of AI	Expectations regarding AI's trajectory in organizational and marketing contexts	Frogeri <i>et al.</i> (2026); Rabban & Singh (2026); Fitria (2023)

Source: elaborated by the authors based on Valizada (2025).

The sample included 27 marketing professionals, 25 AI specialists, and 21 respondents with varied professional backgrounds.

Responses to the five closed-ended questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics (absolute and relative frequencies for each response category), tabulated and charted in Microsoft Excel. The full frequency distribution for each question is presented in the Results and Discussion section (Table 3).

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The study's geographical scope spans Poland (empirical data) and Brazil (theoretical references), which constitutes both a limitation and a strength. As a limitation, the generalizability of empirical findings is constrained by the cultural and institutional specificity of the Polish context. As a strength, the comparison between AI adoption in a

Central European emerging economy and gig labor dynamics in a Latin American context illuminates how similar algorithmic logics produce contextually differentiated but structurally analogous outcomes, consistent with Vaclavik and Oltramari's (2022) call for analyses grounded in the specificities of developing and semi-peripheral economies rather than exclusively in WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic) country contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sample profile

The sample included 27 marketing professionals, 25 AI specialists, and 21 respondents with varied professional backgrounds. In terms of age, 43 respondents were between 22 and 29 years old, 26 were between 30 and 37, and 4 were between 38 and 45. Regarding location, 42 respondents were based in Dąbrowa Górnicza, 26 in Warsaw, and 5 in other Polish cities. Fifty-two respondents held a master's degree, 12 held a bachelor's degree, and 9 held another level of education. Thirty-three respondents were single, 32 were married, and 8 were divorced. Of the 73 respondents, 47 were male and 26 female.

As stated in the Method section, this sample is composed of corporate and technical actors, marketing professionals and AI specialists, rather than gig economy workers. Consequently, the discussion that follows uses the survey data to characterize how AI is adopted and perceived from the standpoint of those who design, deploy, or manage it in organizational settings. Where the discussion draws parallels to the situation of gig workers, these are theoretical and structural parallels grounded in prior research on algorithmic management (e.g., Rezende, Tessarini Junior & Amorim, 2025; Vaclavik & Oltramari, 2022), not empirical claims derived from this survey about workers' own, first-person experience of algorithmic control.

Table 3. Frequency distribution of survey responses (n = 73)

Question	Response category	n	%
Q1 – Why is AI necessary in marketing communication?	Effective and customized consumer interaction	26	35.6
	Better marketing results	21	28.8
	Automated procedures and streamlines	20	27.4
	Others	6	8.2
Q2 – How does AI influence brand posting?	Making hyper-individualized content possible	28	38.4
	Cost efficiency	24	32.9
	Others	21	28.8
Q3 – How do you rate the use of AI in marketing communication in your company?	Very good	25	34.2
	Good	22	30.1
	Excellent	16	21.9
	Fair	7	9.6
	Poor	3	4.1

Q4 – What challenges does your company face in the use of AI?	Data privacy and security	26	35.6
	Integration and system compatibility	18	24.7
	Ethical considerations	15	20.5
	Others	14	19.2
Q5 – Is the future of AI bright?	Yes	59	80.8
	I am not sure	8	11.0
	No	6	8.2

Source: elaborated by the authors based on Valizada (2025).

The Intersection: AI, Marketing, and Labor

The convergence of AI marketing communication and gig economy labor has not been systematically theorized in the literature. Yet the connections are structurally significant. First, the same platforms that use AI to communicate with consumers (through personalized ads, dynamic content, and behavioral targeting) also deploy algorithmic systems to manage the workers who provide services to those consumers. The Uber driver navigates an AI-optimized demand map; the iFood delivery worker accepts jobs allocated by a recommendation algorithm; the Amazon Mechanical Turk worker completes microtasks generated by an AI content system. In each case, the worker is simultaneously a subject of algorithmic marketing (targeted as a consumer) and an object of algorithmic labor management (controlled as a worker).

Second, AI marketing platforms generate the behavioral data that make gig labor management possible. Consumer tracking, engagement analytics, and real-time demand forecasting are not merely marketing tools; they are also the inputs that enable platforms to calculate dynamic prices, optimize delivery routes, and evaluate worker performance. The marketing infrastructure and the labor management infrastructure are, in this sense, the same infrastructure, differentiated only by the direction of data flow.

Third, the ethical issues of AI in marketing communication identified in the survey, including concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias, and manipulation, are structurally parallel to the labor rights concerns identified in gig economy research. In both domains, the opacity of algorithmic decision-making, the information asymmetry between platform and user (whether consumer or worker), and the absence of meaningful accountability mechanisms constitute the central ethical challenges.

As Table 3 shows, among the 73 respondents, the most frequently cited reason for the necessity of AI in marketing communication was that it enables effective and customized consumer interaction (35.6%), followed by better marketing results (28.8%) and automated procedures (27.4%). Regarding organizational assessment, responses concentrated in the positive range: 34.2% rated their organization's use of AI in marketing communication as "very good", 30.1% as "good", and 21.9% as "excellent", together, 86.3% of respondents rated their organization's AI adoption as good or better, while only 13.7% rated it as "fair" or "poor". At the same time, respondents acknowledged significant challenges: data privacy and security was the most frequently cited concern (35.6%), followed by integration

and system compatibility (24.7%) and ethical considerations (20.5%). These findings are consistent with broader trends identified in the international marketing literature (Mandapuram *et al.*, 2023; Ganesan, 2024).

AI in Marketing Communication: Survey Results

The survey conducted with marketing professionals and AI specialists reveals several consistent patterns regarding how professionals perceive and experience AI adoption. The most frequently cited reasons for the need for AI in marketing communication were its ability to enable personalized consumer interaction (35.6%) and to automate procedures (27.4%), consistent with the literature on AI's personalization-at-scale capability (Chandra *et al.*, 2021; Mandapuram *et al.*, 2023). The predominant organizational assessment of AI in marketing concentrated in the “very good” to “good” range (64.4% combined), with a further 21.9% rating it “excellent”, suggesting that among professionals in this sample, AI adoption is viewed as effective and value-generating.

However, the challenges identified by respondents are instructive. Data privacy and security concerns were the most frequently cited challenge (35.6%), followed by system integration and compatibility (24.7%) and ethical considerations (20.5%). These findings resonate with broader debates in the AI ethics literature (Weippl & Schrittwieser, 2023) and with concerns raised by gig economy researchers about the use of behavioral data for worker surveillance and control (Rezende *et al.*, 2025; Kellogg *et al.*, 2020). The ethical considerations cited by marketing professionals are structurally parallel to the fairness concerns raised by gig workers: in both cases, the central issue is asymmetric access to and control over personal data generated by algorithmic systems.

The survey finding that AI significantly enhances brand posting, 38.4% of respondents pointed to hyper-individualized content as the main influence of AI on brand posting, and 32.9% to cost efficiency, corresponds to what the gig economy literature describes as the “algorithmization” of labor relations (Vaclavik & Oltramari, 2022). When a platform uses AI to generate personalized advertising content at scale, it simultaneously creates demand for gig workers (content creators, social media managers, influencers) whose outputs are evaluated and distributed by algorithmic systems. The same AI that serves marketing objectives thereby becomes the infrastructure through which gig work in the creative economy is managed and controlled.

Algorithmic Control as Shared Architecture

The theoretically most productive intersection between AI marketing research and gig economy theory lies in the concept of algorithmic control. As documented by Rezende *et al.* (2025) in their study of ride-hailing drivers in São Paulo, algorithmic HR management operates through three mechanisms, work assignment, remuneration, and performance management, each characterized by opacity, behavioral shaping, and a fundamental information asymmetry between platform and worker. These same mechanisms are present in AI-driven marketing systems, but directed at consumers rather than workers.

Consider the structural parallels: in gig labor management, the platform algorithm assigns tasks to workers based on location, performance ratings, and demand signals, criteria opaque to workers but optimized for platform efficiency (Rezende *et al.*, 2025). In AI marketing communication, recommendation algorithms assign content to consumers

based on behavioral data, purchase history, and demographic profiles, criteria opaque to consumers but optimized for engagement and conversion (Chandra *et al.*, 2021; Ganesan, 2024). In both cases, the algorithm functions as what Kellogg *et al.* (2020) call a “6 Rs” system, restrict, recommend, evaluate, record, reward, and replace, simultaneously structuring behavior and extracting value.

The growing autonomy of marketing and operational algorithms has triggered significant institutional counterweights, most notably the European Union’s Platform Work Directive (PWD), which introduces a legal presumption of employment to curb algorithmic opacity (Katterbauer *et al.*, 2026). Furthermore, the strategic deployment of these AI tools often reflects regional disparities; without unified global standards, digital platforms engage in regulatory arbitrage, navigating between highly regulated, audited Western European markets and more permissive socio-economic environments (Demirtaş & Şahin, 2026).

This parallel is not merely analogical; it is structural. The same algorithmic architecture that delivers personalized ads to consumers tracks the performance of marketers, content creators, and platform workers who produce and distribute that content. As Vaclavik and Oltramari (2022, p. 253) observe in their analysis of the “entrepreneurialization of informality”, the platform “not only facilitates contact between interested agents (sellers and buyers), but also acts in establishing operational regulation”, a dynamic equally applicable to the relationship between AI marketing platforms and the gig workers who populate and serve them.

Data, Personalization, and the Commodification of Behavior

A central theme in both the AI marketing literature and the gig economy literature is the commodification of behavioral data. For marketers, the value of AI lies precisely in its ability to transform behavioral data into actionable insights, personalizing messages, predicting purchases, and optimizing campaigns at the individual level (Mandapuram *et al.*, 2023; Ganesan, 2024). For gig economy researchers, the collection of behavioral data constitutes the primary mechanism through which platforms exercise control over workers, evaluate performance, and distribute rewards and punishments (Rezende *et al.*, 2025; Woodcock & Graham, 2020).

What unites these two perspectives is the recognition that behavioral data is not merely a tool for efficiency; it is a form of power. Bucher *et al.* (2021) argue that algorithmic opacity enables platforms to control behavior not through direct punishment, but through “fear and ignorance of how algorithms work”, a dynamic that applies equally to consumers subjected to manipulative marketing algorithms and workers subjected to opaque performance evaluation systems. The AI system that predicts what a consumer wants to buy tomorrow is built from the same behavioral tracking infrastructure that predicts when a driver may become less productive and should be incentivized to return to activity.

The implications for human capital and employability are significant, as Araújo *et al.* (2022) note. When the primary mechanism for evaluating worker performance is a behavioral scoring system, subject to biases, manipulation, and the cumulative effects of past discrimination, workers’ capacity to invest in and demonstrate human capital is structurally constrained. A content creator whose AI-evaluated engagement metrics are depressed by algorithmic distribution decisions to which she has no access or recourse finds herself in a position structurally analogous to that of the ride-hailing driver whose passenger rating is

affected by factors outside his control (Rezende *et al.*, 2025). In both cases, formal labor market performance markers are determined by algorithmic systems whose logic is opaque, potentially biased, and inaccessible to challenge.

The Future of AI in Marketing: Opportunities and Structural Risks

Survey respondents were markedly optimistic about the future of AI: asked directly whether the future of artificial intelligence is bright, 80.8% answered “yes”, while only 8.2% answered “no” and 11.0% were unsure. This optimism reflects genuine capabilities: AI’s capacity for real-time personalization, predictive analytics, and communication automation offers substantial value for organizations seeking competitive advantage in information-saturated markets. Emerging technologies, including augmented reality, voice search optimization, and IoT-integrated marketing, further extend the potential scope of AI-enabled communication (Fitria, 2023; Berte, 2018).

However, the gig economy literature counsels caution about uncritically embracing AI’s transformative potential without attending to its labor implications. As Vaclavik and Oltramari (2022, p. 254) note, the emergence of digital labor markets represents “a new milestone in the transformations of the world of work”, one that fuses formal and informal labor relations in ways that create new forms of vulnerability while generating new efficiencies. The same AI capabilities that enable a brand to communicate with unprecedented precision create the conditions under which the workers who drive that communication, gig workers, content creators, data labelers, and platform service providers, are subjected to increasingly granular forms of algorithmic control.

From the perspective of Araújo *et al.* (2022), the primary challenge is structural: the gig economy, as constituted by AI-driven platforms, tends to reduce workers to interchangeable inputs whose human capital is systematically devalued by the algorithmization of assessment. When performance is measured by platform ratings and algorithmic scores, rather than by the substantive quality of work, the incentive for organizations to invest in worker development, a central premise of human capital theory, is eroded. This structural misalignment between AI’s marketing potential and its labor implications represents one of the most significant ethical and policy challenges of the current technological moment.

The convergence of AI marketing communication and gig economy dynamics requires what Vaclavik and Oltramari (2022) call a “non-dichotomic logic”, an analytical framework that moves beyond the technology-as-opportunity-or-threat dichotomy, efficiency gains or precarity, to examine the “gray zones” in which algorithmic systems simultaneously produce and extract value. In the context of AI and marketing communication, this means recognizing that the same platform that enables a small business to reach its target audience with unprecedented precision may also constitute the infrastructure through which the workers who manage its social media presence, create its visual content, or moderate its community interactions are subjected to algorithmic control without labor protections.

For marketing practitioners, this recognition has practical implications. The challenges identified in the survey, data privacy, ethical considerations, and integration complexity, are not merely technical problems to be solved, but structural features of AI systems whose architecture reflects particular choices about whose data is collected, how it is used, and

who bears the costs of errors and biases. Addressing these challenges requires not only technical solutions, but organizational commitments to transparency, accountability, and equitable treatment of all participants in the AI marketing ecosystem, including the gig workers whose labor makes AI-driven marketing communication possible.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article has argued for a structural connection between AI in marketing communication and gig economy labor dynamics, a connection grounded in the shared algorithmic architecture of digital platforms, the commodification of behavioral data, and the logic of opacity and control that characterizes both AI marketing systems and algorithmic labor management. Drawing on empirical survey data on AI adoption in marketing communication and a theoretical review of Brazilian gig economy research, the article has demonstrated that these two domains are not merely parallel, but structurally interdependent.

Several key contributions emerge from this analysis. First, the article extends the theoretical framework of Vaclavik and Oltramari (2022) on the “entrepreneurialization of informality” to encompass the AI marketing domain, arguing that AI-driven marketing platforms constitute a form of entrepreneurialization of informality in the creative and knowledge economies, not just in the transportation and delivery sectors originally analyzed. Second, the article connects the algorithmic HR management research of Rezende *et al.* (2025) with the marketing communication literature, demonstrating that the opacity, surveillance, and behavioral shaping documented in gig work contexts are structurally present in AI marketing systems, directed at both workers and consumers. Third, the article situates the employability concerns raised by Araújo *et al.* (2022) in the specific context of AI-mediated marketing work, arguing that the commodification of performance through algorithmic metrics poses particular risks for human capital development among workers in AI-mediated creative and service industries.

The study has several limitations that should guide the interpretation of its findings and direct future research. Most importantly, the empirical component surveys marketing professionals and AI specialists, corporate and technical actors who work with AI systems, rather than gig economy workers themselves; the survey therefore documents corporate and technical perceptions of AI adoption, and the parallels drawn with gig workers’ experiences throughout this article rest on theoretical and structural analogy, not on direct empirical evidence about workers’ lived experience. In addition, the empirical component relies on a relatively small and geographically specific sample (73 respondents in Poland), limiting the generalizability of survey findings to other organizational and cultural contexts. The cross-sectional design precludes longitudinal analysis of how AI adoption in marketing changes over time, or how the labor implications of AI marketing platforms evolve as the technology matures. The theoretical synthesis integrates perspectives from different national contexts (Poland and Brazil) without fully accounting for the institutional and regulatory differences that mediate the relationship between AI adoption and labor dynamics in each context.

Future research should address these limitations through longitudinal and comparative designs that track AI adoption in marketing across industries, regions, and labor market contexts. Qualitative methods, including ethnographic research with gig workers in AI-

driven marketing sectors, such as content creation, influencer marketing, and social media management, would provide the granular, worker-centered data needed to complement the organizational-level survey findings available to date. Studies examining the specific labor implications of distinct AI marketing applications, from chatbots and recommendation engines to generative AI content, would further refine the structural analysis presented

here.

At the policy level, the article's findings suggest that regulation of AI in marketing cannot be decoupled from regulation of AI-mediated labor. Data protection frameworks that confer rights over behavioral data on consumers without extending analogous rights to workers subject to algorithmic performance evaluation are structurally incomplete. Labor regulations that address gig economy precarity without attending to the AI marketing infrastructures that generate and amplify that precarity will also fail to address the root causes of the vulnerabilities they seek to mitigate. A holistic regulatory approach, one that recognizes the shared algorithmic architecture of AI marketing and algorithmic gig labor management, is urgently needed.

As AI continues to transform both how organizations communicate and how work is organized, the structural connections identified in this article will become increasingly salient. These transformations also reinforce the importance of adaptability, continuous learning, critical thinking, and digital competencies as key employability resources in AI-mediated labor markets. In this context, educational institutions and employers play an important role in supporting the development of these capabilities and facilitating workforce adaptation to ongoing technological change. The future of AI in marketing communication is not merely a question of technological capability or organizational efficiency; it is also a question of how the benefits and risks of algorithmic systems are distributed among organizations, consumers, and workers. Attending to these distributive questions is not merely an ethical obligation, it is a prerequisite for the sustainable and legitimate development of AI as a tool for human flourishing rather than a mechanism for extracting value from those least positioned to resist it.

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