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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
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SAVANNAH JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES (SAJOLLCOS)

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CONTENT

SECTION B: LITERATURE

An Assessment of the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Business Communication in Lafia, Nasarawa state and Makurdi, Benue state, Central Nigeria.

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Abstract

The world of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is assumed to be a world of business advertising possibilities. This distinct expectation has heightened the desire of businesses to remain afloat. The AI is an invention that would need to be understood by business owners for marginal integration. This compatibility is dependent on how much of the AI components that has been studied and mastered by the businesses for quick turnover and seamless transition. The application of AI is currently decentralised and filtered into so many online services providers (Media). Every business platform is anticipated to benefit from AI by hooking to either of the components that tickles its fancy. This research foray examines the perspectives of businesses in lafia and Makurdi environs. A survey research methodology was used through the instrumentalities of questionnaires and interview mechanism. A total of 140 businesses were profiled in both locations. The outcome of this experiment reveals a sloppy conceptualisation of the purpose of AI in businesses. The knowledge gap that exists at this level among the owners of businesses are quite huge and shows miles to go before parity is achieved. Business owners see AI as a toy not a tool. The purpose of technological determinism would come to fruition when AI is viewed as a tool upon which the business strategy is embedded.   The agency that set the regulatory framework for businesses are advised to steer this orientation. This is because the few businesses are also likely to run foul of copyright law as the issue of content creation becomes strategic as AI takes a foothold on business enterprise.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Strategy, Business, Communication, Lafia. Makurdi

Introduction

One of the most important components of every business is Communication. Business owners are always at liberty to change a flagship product to suit a desired choice. Yet the communication components remain tangible. This is necessary in order to build a network of customers that invariably drive sales. The goal of every business is to make profit through the patronage of customers hence business communication is strictly an exchange of information between a business and its perceived customers or clients. McLean, (2024) opines that business communication has become an instrument through which the goals and objectives of business are

achieved. This is an integrated approach that highlights the place of skills in business communication.

Business communication has become a dependent variable in the order of business activities. This is because the outcome is tied to how it is being crafted by the managers. Wolf, (2022) advises businesses to leverage on AI as a means of storytelling to build a point of convergence. As the Society develops as a result of technology, such finds its expression in the way business communication is planned and delivered. This is an era of regenerative AI that has the capacity to aid the course of business communication by providing a generative input at every stage of the business communication echelon. The AI does not completely take the place of human being but is created to think and act like human being. Business owners are required to apply the provisions of AI into modern business communication.

Lafia, Nasarawa state and Makurdi, Benue state are seemed as gateway states that are always business savvy and also cosmopolitan in nature. The nearness to each other has a contagious effect on business models which is the touchstone of AI. The business conversations around these metropolis are not reflecting the recent input that AI has provided. This research is set out to establish the level of application of AI input in business communication especially the Small and Medium scale business enterprises. The awareness, opportunities and challenges of AI to businesses in Lafia and Makurdi are also critically examine to know the level of preparedness of businesses to adopt AI.

Review of Relevant Literature

Artificial intelligence is prevalent across many industries. This is the ability of a computer to undertake a specific task that is similar to human being. According to Dickson, (2022), artificial intelligence is the ability of digital computers or computer controlled robots to solve problems that are normally associated with the higher intelligence processing capabilities of humans. Artificial intelligence simply refers to the ability of a computer to behave and act like human beings. Boden, (2006) opines that this action is depicted in learning and execution of prompts in a given situation. This process also involves a structured learning called machine learning or ML and this is a subset of artificial intelligence which allows systems to learn from data and improve their performance over time without being explicitly programmed.

Mitchelle, (2019) notes that algorithms is embedded in the learning curve and can analyse large volumes of data, identify patterns and trends, and make predictions based on historical information. The goal for artificial intelligence is to do things such as recognise patterns, make decisions and judge like humans. This would place artificial intelligence as a dependently created pantheon that is intelligently rooted to its environment. The longer learning process allows it to evolve and metamorphose just like animals in its ecology and its capabilities to adapt to variations in the original place of abode.

In 1951, Alan Turing was credited with the story of developing one of the first computers in the modern world to help crack German Armed Forces codes called Enigma. The Enigma was a type of enciphering machine used by the German armed forces to send messages securely. Turing developed a Bombe that made it easier for people to break into such device and help to understand the message Subsequently, the released of the Oscar-nominated film helped mimics and popularises the Turing concept. The movie tilted 'The Imitation Game' raised the question of artificial intelligence with BBC Radio. Turing had earlier affirmed to a hypothesis that machine could think hence this question was asked by a BBC correspondent, "If a machine can think, it might think more intelligently than we do, and then where should we be?" This experiment remains largely unfulfilled owing to the artificial nature of the society and the evolving nature of artificial intelligence itself.

In 1956, John McCarthy was credited with developing the term artificial intelligence as he held the first artificial intelligence conference. 40 years into the 1990s and the supercomputer Deep Blue was designed by IBM and it went on to defeat World Champion chess player Garry Kasparov. Byford, (2017) perceived this as the first time that artificial intelligence could potentially replace human beings. A few years later, Amazon started the process of seamlessly building artificial intelligence into both its marketing networks and its distribution framework. In 1998, they began using collaborative filtering, enabling recommendations for millions of customers. Anderson, (2017).

Anderson, (2017) notes further that in 2015, google introduced an artificial intelligence algorithm RankBrain, which changed the way search queries were interpreted. This was among the first cases of artificial intelligence looking for meaning or intention behind how users searched. In 1994, when websites first arrived in Nigeria internet ecosystem, in a corporate sense, businesses had this premonition that they would not be selling physically anymore. All they needed to do was set up a website which would have all their products and services listed and customers would simply head online and transact around the clock. Clients talk about how it would totally revolutionise their business because the website would make money for them while they sleep and in almost all cases that did not happen.

In 2005, social media came along and business pounced on it as a marketing and communication tool. Then the old rhetoric or euphoria remains about this cool new way of communicating to the audience for free. They would have a marketplace like customers becoming their friends and accepting all of the marketing information they would send. This new thing called social media would streamline their marketing and save them a fortune on having to advertise That did not happen. Ten years later, online video started to take hold in the mid-2010s. The same assumption took a better part of the moment. Nilsson,

(2018) affirmed that today, we are able to record videos to tell people about what we do and they will sit there and they will watch us talking about our products and services. So, early YouTube channels were filled with television advertisements. And as a consumer, it is not these videos that work the magic.

On the other side, a business communication refers to the aggregate of communication that organisations undertake to reach both internal and external public. Lehman & Dufrene, (2021) demonstrate the insights business communication can bring to every enterprise. It is perceived as the lifeblood of an organisation. Arguably, what business communication brings can not be replaced.

Bovee & Thill, (2021) echo the same sentiments as regards to the fundamental stability business gains in proportion to the effort dissipated on business communication.

Bailey, (2021) insists that for effective business communication to take place there must be a harnessing of other developmental inputs like AI. This cohesion he termed 'technical writing'. The fusion of AI and business communication remain largely undemonstrated by the available writers due to the rapid nature of AI and its prompt mechanism upon which the instructions are embedded.

The way people consume business messages has changed radically in recent years. This is fuelled in part by the emergence of AI and its attendant consequences.

The common concern for business in Lafia and Makurdi environs is that in business communication, which includes advertising, there is a tendency to look at new technological developments like artificial intelligence as toys and not tools. Again, it always seems to overestimate the impact of these new tools while at the same time completely underestimating the strategy that is needed for it to be effective. The current conversations that businesses in Lafia and Makurdi are having indicate a bleak and a mixed trajectory of choice. The choice of using AI as a toy is a significant error that could impact on the output of business communication and the other choice of using it as a tool allows it to stay strategic in its communication protocol and this can lead to optimum gain as simulation of human intelligence drives the business communication essential components.

Theoretical   Framework

TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM: This theory assumes that a society's technology progresses by following its own internal logic of efficiency while determining the development of the social structure and cultural values. This idea is alluded to an American sociologist and economist, Thorstein Veblen. This theory sees technical development and innovation as the principal agent of change in social, economic and political landscape. This placed technology as the basis for all human

activity. By this position, technology has become the key governing force in society. Bovee & Thill, (2021) opines that technology changes the way human thinks and reason. This could form the conversations and interactions that govern the society of any standards

Ciboh, (2005) sees technology (culture) as an ultimate binder of history. Our belief is a sum total of our technological acquisition. This is quite apt because technology carries with it the societal embedded value that makes any form of rebellion or detachment from technology grossly inevitable. A forceful or gradual detachment of any sort from technology could result to a complete erosion of values. On the current trend, technology drives every known society hence AI is not different in this category. Technological progress equals society progress. When technology is stabilised, its design tends to dictate users' behaviour, consequently resulting in social change. For example, technology has invented language that has expanded modes of communication between individuals.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative measure using a trio of observation, interview and questionnaire. An attempt is made to dissect the basic indices that constitute artificial intelligence. These indices are drawn from the pool of information the respondents provided. There is a conceptual and adaptative analysis of business communication within Lafia,

Nasarawa state and Makurdi, Benue state of Nigeria. The two selected cities are cosmopolitan and have the tendency to embrace an innovation like artificial intelligence.

A total of 140 business communication messages were observed and the owners interviewed just to affirm their astute application of artificial intelligence in the course of advertising their businesses through the use of sign board, online media and other means. The businesses sampled were taken from fashion and design, boutique, restaurant and other business centres whose business communication is conceived and implemented within the same affirmed or mentioned location.

The distribution of the questionnaires, interviews and observations are as follows

Location
LAFIA: 70
MAKURDI:70
TOTAL: 140

Industry
Fashion and design: 50
Boutique : 50
Restaurant : 50
Business centre: 20
Total: 140

The unit of analysis are those layers of issues that surround the prompting of artificial intelligence. They are as follows:

1. Content creation and optimisation
2. Using artificial intelligence to monitor and analyse   data
3. Better managing campaigns

4. Streamlining customer services processes
5. Better or wider research
6 Not a point of difference

Data Presentation and Analysis

There are many ways you can use artificial intelligence to improve your marketing and communication efforts to reach your target audience more effectively and to generate a better outcome for your efforts. It could be in terms of more sales leads, better sales leads or more inquiries, better engagement, or whichever measurement metric and key Performance Indicators (KPI) you are using.

One of the benefits of looking at artificial intelligence reverse by starting with the outcome is that it helps you select the right tool for the job and it helps you stay strategic.

The following are the key areas upon which this research analysis is hinged

Table 1: Respondents responses to the use of artificial intelligence in business communication

Question	Response		
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total
Are you aware that AI is used to create contents?	34(24.3)	106(75.7)	140
Use of AI to monitor business	13(9.3)	127(90.7)	140
Does AI make your advertising better?	13(9.3)	127(90.7)	140
Does AI make you to do many things at once?	28(20.0)	112(80.0)	140
Are you aware that AI can be used for research?	20(14.3)	120(85.7)	140
Are you aware that AI is not the most vital element of business communications?	20(14.3)	120(85.7)	140
Do you think AI can replace human creativity?	0(0.0)	140(100)	140
Does AI tell an original business story?	0(0.0)	140(100)	140

(Field survey, 2024)

Content Creation and Optimisation

Artificial intelligence is used for content creation and optimisation. Artificial intelligence can streamline and optimise your content creation processes. This is perhaps the largest benefit that this innovation can provide for your marketing and communication activities. Developing content has been the largest challenge for communicators for decades. In the online world since the early 1990s (the visual timeline of the internet), content has been both the biggest time sponge and the largest

frustration. You have these platforms that are hungry for content, and the constant pressure is to feed them Natural Language Generation (NLG) algorithms can automatically generate content for you, providing your input is targeted, strategic and clear. You can use text-based, visual-based or video-based platforms to help you create basic content - everything from article outlines to fully written and developed articles, tweets to posts, captions that support your video, to converting inch-thick reports and PDFs into summary documents or even small chunks of content that you can share. So what is the key benefit to business communication here?

The benefits include everything from time saved to conserving your brainpower so that you can invest it in other elements of your marketing and communication, uncorking writer's block through to exploring different ideas and directions for your content.

Using Artificial Intelligence to Monitor and Analyse Your Data

Artificial intelligence is relatively new in Nigeria and its fluidity makes it difficult for businesses to know all or its latent usage. 13 of the respondents never knew that AI is a tool that provides data insight for ease of management of information.

Beyond content creation, artificial intelligence can empower you to make data-driven decisions by analysing vast amounts of customer data. Machine learning algorithms can extract valuable insights from customer behaviour, preferences, and interactions across various channels,

helping understand your target audience better, identify trends, and predict future consumer behaviour. This last point can help business better engage with audience particularly considering taking a longer-term relationship approach with your customers. Artificial intelligence-powered analytics tools have been with us for a while now, such as Google Analytics to help you identify the trends and track the effectiveness of the campaigns and messaging that you deliver.

So with AI you can look at your own social media platforms and tackle the huge responsibility of managing and monitoring. AI can now take on the previously onerous and time-consuming process of collecting and monitoring data So what is the key benefit to business communication here?

This is as much about better targeting as a time saver for you. Artificial intelligence can allow you to analyse more effectively which in turn helps you to streamline and better target your messaging that goes out to the marketplace.

Better Managing Campaigns

28 of the respondents agreed that it is not known to them that AI could help to manage business if rightfully deplored. They have a limited knowledge of the application processes of this enterprise, it helps the business communication components. Although this is an extension of the previous two points. By analysing responses and being better targeted with your content, you can be more effective in tweaking and tailoring your campaign or marketing

collateral both in a real-time sense and to ensure that its effectiveness grows over time. By continuously analysing performance metrics such as click-through rates, conversions, and engagement levels, AI algorithms can make automatic adjustments to campaign elements. These include targeting, advert placement, messaging, and budget allocation.

You can use AI to better segment your customers by specific attributes, enabling

you to create highly personalised campaigns.

What Is The Benefit Here to Business Communication?

Clearly measuring the effectiveness of advertising, marketing or public relations

campaigns over the decades has never been as clear cut as it is today. AI allows you to be able to analyse effectively in a way that is both time effective and cost-effective.

Streamlining your customer services processes

28 of the respondents could make reference to how this process is applied in handling customers issues like telecommunications and banking services, while 112 of them are unaware of this process.

AI can assist with anything from employing a Chabot to providing more personalised content or tools to help your customer service staff. A virtual assistant, in the current climate chatbot do allow business to take a proportion of customer

questions and have them answered in the moment without draining staff resources and making service available all the time. It also allows business to better funnel customer service requests so that the simple ones' do not clog the phone, email or online channels. This gives space for more personalised or complex questions. And AI can streamline your scripting for the Communication team giving them a range of answers to use, or even better answers to use.

What is the benefit here to business communication?The main benefit here is about time and resource management. It also can improve response rates and response times.

Better Or Wider Research

Overwhelming number confirm the place of research in advertising messages and this could be a good beginning to have a good foothold on the advertising ecosystem. Good research findings are at the heart of any good marketing communication as business narrows the gap between need, target markets and audiences preferences.

AI can function as a research tool that you can add to your qualitative research that engages directly with your target market. Business owners can also start researching

how business communication are done just at the touch of the fingers on the smartphone and get written content as results. What is the benefit to business communication?

This one is mainly about time, but it is also about streamlining business communication research,
which is also about cost. AI can deliver real positives if it is duly utilized.

Artificial Is not a Point of Difference

As it currently stands, and until AI crosses the magical threshold of being able to
create rather than aggregate, it is simply reaching into a massive repository of
everything that already exists. No matter how big the dataset is, none of the output is truly original. Instead, it is composed of an amalgam or average of what has come before it. The results are just that average. Even if businesses were to rewrite its prompting either video or text,
 it is still drawing from the same pool of information. And every business is drawing from that pool as well.
But your business needs more than just average to stand out. If you are a marketer working in communication. one of the key elements of your brand story is that you have a point of difference. You stand out for one key reason which is an articulation of your value proposition. And this focuses on the value you provide that needs to be at the very heart of what it is that you produce in marketing and communication programs.
The implication here is that the sameness of AI content will not build the same connection with your audience if it does not have that point of difference at the heart of its production. You can tweak your interaction with various prompts to

give it as much knowledge as possible, but it is still drawing from the same pool as every other
business.

Ai Will not be a Replacement of Authentic Human Content

While AI has immense potential in marketing and communication, it cannot replace the creativity, empathy, ethical judgment, and contextual understanding
that human marketers or advertisers bring to the table. And if you rely too much on AI input to produce all the contents, business will stand to lose one of the key touch points that customers value with businesses and that is human interaction.
 Regardless of your product or service or your position in the
marketplace, one of the strengths of your business is the human interaction that
you provide. Good marketing communications will know that they are not putting information to the marketplace. Businesses are trying to reach their target markets, who are individual people with specific needs and wants. It is about articulating the customers' needs. leaning too much on AI to do the heavy lifting with marketing communication actually stops us from building that real human-to-human interaction. Using AI to describe what it is like to be your customer, to produce content that the target audience can see themselves in or to develop content that shows an understanding of human nature is problematic as it is not authentic.

Artificial Intelligence Will not be a Storyteller

Storytelling is powerful. As more and more people are filtering your business messaging through their own lens, the more compelling way of persuading them through content is through storytelling. This is called content marketing.

There is one major reason to consider storytelling in business communication. Brand storytelling allows you to connect with your audience by telling your individual story.

People are entrenched in social media, thumbing their way through an ever-scrolling feed. Customers are conditioned to reading about stories and about personal experiences and they are turning off from corporate messaging that looks like an advertisement. So,one has to telltheir story through the eyes of their staff, volunteers and customers.

The problem is that AI will not help at this point in time as it draws from a foundation of information rather than inspiration. It will illustrate your story based on the information it finds. This is going to be an aggregation of what everyone else says about it. It may be highly informative, but it will not be from the perspective of a customer that the prospective customers are hoping to see.

AI Is not a Builder of Trust and Empathy

Trust and empathy are absolutely vital in customer service and brand loyalty. They form the foundation for building strong and lasting relationships with customers. Trust is the belief that your customers have in you, that you will act in their best interest and deliver on their promises. When customers trust you, they are more likely to be loyal, make repeat purchases, and recommend the business to others.

Trust is built through consistent and reliable service, transparency, and fulfilling customer expectations. Empathy involves putting yourself in the customers' shoes, listening to their concerns and responding with understanding and compassion that helps to show them that they are both acknowledged and valued.

And in sales terms, research is showing that emotional intelligence (or EQ) is a sign of growth – brands with higher EQ are outperforming stock market indices and growing faster than competitors .Building trust and managing and maintaining relationships with customers requires human interaction and emotional connection, and here is where AI in its current format becomes a clog in the wheels of business communication. While AI-powered chat box can provide basic

support, they may not fully grasp the emotional context of customer interactions.

Human marketers are better equipped to handle complex emotional nuances, build

relationships, and provide empathetic customer experiences.

AI Will not be as Strategic As You Need It To Be

A magic content wand like generative AI seems like a panacea, but it is not a long-term solution.

Communication content needs to be strategic. Exhibit A: Semrush's survey on content

marketing discovered that 80% of brands who were highly successful had a strategy. AI is not strategic because it lacks the subject matter expertise you bring, and the audience experience you are aware of. It is not factoring in previous successful or unsuccessful content.

Business communication strategy drives content.

Content developed by AI does not start with strategy, it does not check in after it is done to check if it is strategic. This is a major issue with relying on AI for content without any oversight. The role of checking whether it is strategic lies with the business communication or the advertiser as the case may be, not the artificial intelligence

Findings

Advertising can benefit with adoption of AI. It allows for editing of an old scripts or

produce new ideas. And with print ads, a test visual concepts or even develop guides for the graphic designers or agencies.

Scripting for presentations and sales pitches can tweak the scripts that sales team uses and even help them learn their scripting by converting to audio scripting for presentations, whether that is online or face to face. AI can even help Polish the

presentation and delivery skills. There is

speechwriting. Go beyond simply asking AI to write your speech and instead tailor it according to a certain voice, style or audience that you are trying to reach in customer service communication.

Signage and advertising are two visual elements that often find themselves in the marketing and communication arsenal. When it comes to signage, this could be anything from outdoor campaign based on signage through to home designed directional signage for staff. It could be digital signage hang in the online presence. When it comes to advertising, it could be paid for spots in printed publications, or even advertisements done for email newsletters.

The key to good signage and advertising is to have a good visual hook, which draws in the reader to read the message, which is usually short and to the point. AI can assist with these visual tasks, with a number of platforms and programs available to easily put together the whole visual or elements of it.

Artificial intelligence helps to review all touch points with one's customers at every stage of their journey from awareness to acquisition, from transaction to follow up. It can improve customer service performance by giving people better scripting to follow that scripting is easy to generate with AI.

One key benefit AI can unlock for you is the time that it can save. AI does change the usual process of creativity by giving you the opportunity to

produce a first draft at a moment's notice in business communication.

The constant evolution and speed of development allows for creation of knowledge, talent and skill gaps in business communication. Implementing AI in business requires a team carrying specialised skills and the latest knowledge. And it may be competing with other organisations for those very same people.

Recommendations

AI relies heavily on data, often collected from individuals to train and improve its

algorithms. The use of personal data for AI purposes raises concerns about privacy and data protection, and it is essential to establish robust safeguards to

ensure that individuals' data is collected, stored, and used in a responsible and ethical manner, with informed consent and transparency.

Speaking of transparency, as AI systems become more complex and autonomous, it becomes crucial to establish mechanisms to ensure it. It can be challenging to understand how AI systems arrive at certain decisions or predictions, especially with deep learning algorithms. Ensuring transparency in AI decision-making processes is vital to maintain trust and allow individuals affected by AI systems to understand and challenge decisions when necessary.

This is a major issue, and there are two halves of the issue of copyright when it comes to AI. Firstly, can you legally use what you use or are you breaching copyright and secondly, can other people use what you create?

The entire legal systems around the world are still grappling with the concept of how copyright and AI work together. It is more than what content creators think, in the sense that if you have technology that is analysing and aggregating all work it has access to, and then producing something new with no real check against copyright.

The second half of copyright (and one that is rarely considered) when it comes to AI is can other people use what you create? You know, that same sprawling database containing everybody else's work that you expect AI to trawl through on your behalf also includes your work. Which means the challenge here is, what if somebody comes up with a logo that looks very similar to yours? What happens if somebody uses a campaign slogan or a visual representation that looks suspiciously similar to what you were using? As much as you are checking to see if you can use other people's work, you would hope that other people are checking before they can use yours.

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