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Beyond the Disclosure Dilemma: Effects of AI-Generated Brand Voice on Brand Authenticity and Attitude

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Abstract: *The increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) in marketing communication has transformed how brands construct and deliver their brand voice. While AI-generated content offers efficiency and scalability, it also raises concerns regarding brand authenticity and consumer responses. This study examines the effects of AI-generated brand voice disclosure on brand authenticity and brand attitude, with brand voice authenticity positioned as a key explanatory mechanism. Using a between-subjects experimental design, data were collected through an online survey and analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and structural equation modeling (SEM). The results indicate that disclosure of AI-generated brand voice significantly reduces perceived brand authenticity compared to human-generated communication. However, AI disclosure does not directly diminish brand attitude. SEM results reveal that brand voice authenticity positively influences brand authenticity, which in turn significantly enhances brand attitude, indicating a partial mediation effect. These findings suggest that consumer responses to AI-generated brand communication are primarily shaped by authenticity perceptions rather than disclosure alone. The study contributes to branding and AI literature by highlighting authenticity as a central mechanism in AI-mediated brand communication and offers strategic insights for managers balancing transparency and brand integrity.*

Keywords: *Artificial intelligence; Brand voice authenticity; Brand authenticity; Brand attitude; Marketing communication*

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The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has fundamentally transformed contemporary marketing communication and brand management practices. Initially adopted to support analytical and operational functions, AI has increasingly assumed a generative role, particularly in producing textual content such as product descriptions, promotional narratives, branded social media posts, and conversational interfaces through chatbots (Knapp, 2017; Iwama & Kano, 2018). This development represents a critical shift in how brand voice is constructed and communicated, raising important theoretical and managerial questions regarding the nature of authenticity in AI-mediated brand communication.

In brand management literature, brand voice is widely understood as the linguistic and stylistic expression of a brand's identity, encompassing tone, word choice, narrative style, and consistency across communication channels (Kohli & Yen, 2020). A coherent and authentic brand voice plays a pivotal role in shaping brand meaning, fostering emotional connections, and cultivating favorable consumer evaluations (Aaker, 1991; Molleda, 2010). Consequently, the growing involvement of AI in generating brand voice challenges the traditional assumption that brand communication is inherently human-driven, thereby problematizing established notions of authenticity and trust.

Brand authenticity has emerged as a central construct in contemporary marketing research, reflecting consumers' perceptions of a brand as genuine, credible, and true to its values (Brown et al., 2003; Gilmore & Pine, 2007). Prior studies suggest that authenticity is no longer a peripheral attribute but a key determinant of brand evaluations, influencing brand attitudes, trust, and long-term loyalty (Napoli et al., 2014; Morhart et al., 2015). In this context, the use of AI-generated brand voice introduces a conceptual tension between technological efficiency and consumers' expectations of human originality and sincerity in brand communication.

This tension becomes particularly salient in relation to transparency and disclosure practices. As AI-generated content becomes increasingly indistinguishable from human-written text, firms face a strategic dilemma regarding whether to disclose the use of AI in their brand communications. On the one hand, transparency and disclosure are often associated with ethical responsibility and enhanced credibility, potentially strengthening consumer trust (Hustvedt & Kang, 2013; Cambier & Poncin, 2020). On the other hand, research on algorithm aversion indicates that consumers may exhibit skepticism toward algorithmically generated outputs, perceiving them as less authentic or emotionally engaging than human-generated content, even when objective quality is comparable (Clerwall, 2014; Berger et al., 2021).

Empirical evidence regarding the effects of AI disclosure, however, remains inconclusive and highly context-dependent. Studies in algorithmic journalism reveal that audiences tend to rate human-authored articles as more enjoyable and authentic, while attributing higher objectivity to AI-written texts (Graefe et al., 2018). Conversely, research in digital service encounters, particularly involving chatbots, suggests that disclosing AI usage does not necessarily undermine consumer responses and may even enhance perceptions of reliability and efficiency in utilitarian contexts (Cheng & Jiang, 2021; Mozafari et al., 2021). These mixed findings underscore the importance of examining AI disclosure effects within specific communicative domains, such as brand voice, where emotional resonance and symbolic meaning are especially salient.

Despite the growing body of research on AI-generated content, scholarly attention to AI-generated brand voice remains limited. Existing studies have largely focused on functional interactions, such as customer service automation or informational content, while overlooking how AI-generated language shapes broader brand-level evaluations. In particular, the interrelationships between brand voice authenticity, overall brand authenticity, and brand attitude have not been sufficiently explored in the context of AI-mediated communication. This represents a significant gap in the literature, given that brand attitude constitutes a central predictor of consumer behavior, encompassing both affective and cognitive evaluations of the brand (Spears & Singh, 2004).

From a theoretical perspective, processing fluency theory provides a useful lens for understanding consumer responses to AI-generated brand voice. The theory posits that stimuli that are easier to process and align with consumers' expectations tend to elicit more positive evaluations (Lee & Labroo, 2004). Accordingly, if AI-generated brand voice is perceived as coherent, natural, and consistent with brand identity, its disclosure may not inherently diminish authenticity perceptions or brand attitudes. Rather, the impact of disclosure may

depend on how consumers interpret the symbolic meaning of AI involvement in brand communication.

Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to move beyond the disclosure dilemma by systematically examining the effects of AI-generated brand voice on brand authenticity and brand attitude. By investigating whether and how AI disclosure influences consumers' perceptions of brand voice authenticity and subsequent brand evaluations, this research aims to contribute to the theoretical understanding of brand communication in the age of artificial intelligence. Furthermore, the study offers practical insights for brand managers navigating the strategic trade-offs between transparency, technological adoption, and the preservation of authentic brand relationships.

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Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative experimental research design to examine the effects of AI-generated brand voice on brand authenticity and brand attitude. Experimental methods are particularly appropriate for this research because they enable causal inference by systematically manipulating the independent variable while controlling for extraneous influences (Shadish et al., 2002). Consistent with prior branding and AI communication research, a between-subjects experimental design was employed to compare consumer responses across different brand voice conditions (Graefe et al., 2018; Cheng & Jiang, 2021).

Specifically, the experiment manipulated the source of brand voice generation (AI-generated vs. human-generated), accompanied by an explicit disclosure statement. This approach allows for an examination of whether the disclosure of AI authorship influences consumers' perceptions of brand authenticity and their subsequent brand attitudes.

Stimulus Development

The experimental stimuli consisted of short brand communication texts designed to represent a realistic brand voice scenario, such as a product description or promotional brand message. Following established procedures in experimental branding research, a fictitious brand name was used to eliminate potential confounding effects related to brand familiarity, prior attitudes, or existing brand associations (Aaker, 1991; Napoli et al., 2014).

To ensure internal validity, the textual content across conditions was kept identical in wording, tone, and length, with the only variation being the disclosure of the content source. In the AI-generated condition, participants were informed that the brand message was generated using artificial intelligence, whereas in the human-generated condition, participants were told that the message was written by a human brand communication specialist. This manipulation strategy aligns with prior studies on algorithmic disclosure and content perception (Clerwall, 2014; Berger et al., 2021).

A pretest involving a small sample of respondents was conducted to confirm that the stimuli were perceived as realistic, understandable, and appropriate representations of brand communication. The pretest results indicated no significant differences in perceived clarity or quality between the stimuli, supporting their suitability for the main experiment.

Sample and Data Collection

Data were collected using an online survey-based experiment, which is widely used in consumer behavior and digital marketing research due to its efficiency and ability to reach diverse respondent pools (Hair et al., 2019). Participants were adult consumers with prior experience engaging with branded content in digital environments. A random assignment procedure was applied to allocate participants to the experimental conditions, ensuring equivalence across groups and minimizing selection bias. To enhance data quality, several

screening criteria were implemented, including attention checks and minimum completion time thresholds. Responses that failed these criteria were excluded from the final dataset.

The final sample size met the recommended thresholds for experimental research and multivariate analysis, providing sufficient statistical power to detect medium-sized effects (Cohen, 1988).

Measures

All constructs in this study were measured using **multi-item scales** adapted from well-established prior research. Items were assessed using a **seven-point Likert scale** ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”), consistent with branding and consumer attitude research conventions.

- **Brand Voice Authenticity**

Brand voice authenticity was measured using items adapted from prior authenticity and brand communication studies (Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2014). The scale captures the extent to which the brand message was perceived as genuine, natural, and consistent with a coherent brand identity.

- **Brand Authenticity**

Brand authenticity was operationalized as consumers’ perceptions of the brand as honest, credible, and true to its stated values. Measurement items were adapted from established brand authenticity scales validated in previous research (Bruhn et al., 2012; Morhart et al., 2015).

- **Brand Attitude**

Brand attitude was measured using a semantic differential scale adapted from Spears and Singh (2004), capturing respondents’ overall evaluative judgments of the brand (e.g., unfavorable/favorable, negative/positive, unappealing/appealing).

Control variables such as age, gender, and prior familiarity with AI-generated content were included to account for potential heterogeneity in consumer responses.

Manipulation Check

To verify the effectiveness of the experimental manipulation, a manipulation check was conducted by asking participants to identify the perceived source of the brand message (AI-generated vs. human-generated). Consistent with best practices in experimental research, respondents who failed the manipulation check were excluded from the analysis to preserve internal validity (Perdue & Summers, 1986).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using structural equation modeling (SEM) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) techniques. SEM was employed to examine the relationships among brand voice authenticity, brand authenticity, and brand attitude, as well as to assess the overall fit of the proposed conceptual model (Hair et al., 2019). ANOVA was used to test mean differences between experimental conditions and to evaluate the direct effects of AI disclosure on the dependent variables. Reliability and validity were assessed through Cronbach’s alpha, composite reliability, and confirmatory factor analysis. Convergent and discriminant validity were evaluated following established criteria (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to established ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained prior to data collection, and respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. No deceptive practices beyond standard experimental disclosure were employed, and participants were debriefed at the conclusion of the study.

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RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis and Measurement Model

Prior to hypothesis testing, the measurement properties of the constructs were assessed to ensure reliability and validity. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using structural equation modeling procedures. The measurement model demonstrated an acceptable fit to the data ($\chi^2/df = 2.41$; CFI = 0.94; TLI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.056), indicating that the constructs adequately represented the observed variables.

All constructs exhibited strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Hair et al., 2019). Convergent validity was established, as all standardized factor loadings were significant and above 0.70, and average variance extracted (AVE) values exceeded 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 1. Measurement Model: Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Item	Standardized Loading	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
Brand Voice Authenticity	BVA1	0.82	0.88	0.90	0.64
	BVA2	0.79			
	BVA3	0.81			
Brand Authenticity	BA1	0.85	0.91	0.92	0.66
	BA2	0.83			
	BA3	0.79			
Brand Attitude	BAT1	0.84	0.89	0.91	0.65
	BAT2	0.80			
	BAT3	0.82			

Source: Author's data analysis, 2026.

Note: CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to examine the relationships among the study variables. As shown in Table 2, all correlations were positive and statistically significant. Discriminant validity was supported, as the square roots of AVE (diagonal values) exceeded the inter-construct correlations.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Construct	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Brand Voice Authenticity	5.21	0.88	0.80		
2. Brand Authenticity	5.08	0.91	0.62	0.81	
3. Brand Attitude	5.34	0.85	0.54	0.68	0.79

Source: Author's data analysis, 2026.

Note: Diagonal elements (bold) represent the square root of AVE.

Manipulation Check

A manipulation check was conducted to verify whether respondents correctly perceived the source of the brand voice. A chi-square test indicated a significant association between the experimental condition and perceived authorship of the brand message ($\chi^2 = 42.76$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the manipulation of AI-generated versus human-generated brand voice was successful.

ANOVA Results

To examine the direct effects of AI-generated brand voice disclosure on brand authenticity and brand attitude, one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were performed. The results, summarized in Table 3, reveal a significant main effect of brand voice source on brand authenticity.

Participants exposed to a human-generated brand voice reported significantly higher brand authenticity perceptions than those exposed to an AI-generated brand voice with

disclosure. However, the difference in brand attitude between the two conditions was not statistically significant, suggesting that AI disclosure primarily affects authenticity-related perceptions rather than overall evaluative judgments.

Table 3. ANOVA Results

Dependent Variable	Brand Voice Source	Mean (AI)	Mean (Human)	F-value	p-value	Dependent Variable
Brand Authenticity	AI vs. Human	4.92	5.31	6.47	0.012	Brand Authenticity
Brand Attitude	AI vs. Human	5.28	5.40	1.21	0.271	Brand Attitude

Source: Author's data analysis, 2026.

Structural Equation Modeling Results

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to test the hypothesized relationships among brand voice authenticity, brand authenticity, and brand attitude. The structural model demonstrated good fit indices (CFI = 0.93; TLI = 0.92; RMSEA = 0.058), indicating an adequate representation of the data.

As presented in Table 4, brand voice authenticity exerted a strong and positive effect on brand authenticity ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$). In turn, brand authenticity had a significant positive effect on brand attitude ($\beta = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$). The direct effect of brand voice authenticity on brand attitude was positive but weaker ($\beta = 0.21$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting partial mediation.

Bootstrapping analysis (5,000 resamples) confirmed that brand authenticity partially mediated the relationship between brand voice authenticity and brand attitude, as the indirect effect was significant and the confidence interval did not include zero.

Table 4. Structural Model Results

Hypothesis	Structural Path	Standardized β	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	Brand Voice Authenticity $\rightarrow$ Brand Authenticity	0.58	8.74	<0.001	Supported
H2	Brand Authenticity $\rightarrow$ Brand Attitude	0.64	9.21	<0.001	Supported
H3	Brand Voice Authenticity $\rightarrow$ Brand Attitude	0.21	2.45	0.014	Supported

Source: Author's data analysis.

Summary of Results

Overall, the results demonstrate that AI-generated brand voice disclosure significantly influences perceptions of brand authenticity, while its effect on brand attitude is indirect and mediated through authenticity perceptions. These findings suggest that the impact of AI-generated brand communication is more nuanced than a simple negative bias, emphasizing the central role of authenticity as a psychological mechanism linking brand voice to consumer evaluations.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to move beyond the disclosure dilemma by examining how AI-generated brand voice influences brand authenticity and brand attitude. By integrating experimental evidence with a structural equation modeling approach, this research provides a nuanced understanding of how consumers evaluate AI-mediated brand communication. The findings offer several important theoretical and managerial insights into the evolving role of artificial intelligence in brand management.

First, the ANOVA results indicate that disclosure of AI-generated brand voice significantly reduces perceived brand authenticity compared to human-generated brand voice. This finding aligns with prior research on algorithm aversion, which suggests that consumers tend to view algorithmic outputs as less genuine or emotionally resonant than those produced by humans (Clerwall, 2014; Berger et al., 2021). In the context of brand communication,

authenticity appears to be strongly associated with the perceived human origin of language, reinforcing the notion that consumers continue to attribute symbolic and moral value to human creativity in branding.

However, the absence of a significant direct effect of AI disclosure on brand attitude offers a more refined interpretation of consumer responses. While AI-generated brand voice may undermine authenticity perceptions, it does not automatically translate into negative overall evaluations of the brand. This finding supports the argument that brand attitude is a higher-order construct influenced by multiple evaluative cues, rather than by disclosure alone (Spears & Singh, 2004). In other words, consumers may recognize the artificial origin of brand communication without penalizing the brand outright, particularly when the content remains coherent, relevant, and professionally crafted.

The structural equation modeling results further clarify this relationship by demonstrating that brand authenticity plays a central mediating role between brand voice authenticity and brand attitude. Specifically, brand voice authenticity exerts a strong positive influence on brand authenticity, which in turn significantly shapes brand attitude. This finding extends prior brand authenticity research by empirically validating the idea that authenticity judgments operate hierarchically, beginning at the message level and cascading upward to the brand level (Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2014).

From a theoretical perspective, these results are consistent with processing fluency theory, which posits that stimuli that are easier to process and align with consumers' expectations tend to generate more favorable evaluations (Lee & Labroo, 2004). When AI-generated brand voice is perceived as natural and consistent with brand identity, its artificial origin becomes less salient, allowing fluency to offset potential authenticity penalties. Conversely, when AI disclosure disrupts expectations of human authorship, consumers may experience reduced fluency, leading to lower authenticity perceptions without necessarily affecting brand attitude directly.

Importantly, the partial mediation effect observed in this study suggests that the influence of AI-generated brand voice on brand attitude is not binary but contingent upon authenticity perceptions. This finding challenges overly deterministic views of AI disclosure effects and contributes to the growing literature that emphasizes contextual and psychological moderators in human AI interaction (Mozafari et al., 2021; Cheng & Jiang, 2021). Rather than asking whether AI disclosure is inherently beneficial or harmful, the results suggest that the critical issue lies in how AI-generated communication is framed and perceived in relation to brand identity.

These findings also carry significant managerial implications. For brand managers, the results underscore the importance of treating AI not merely as a cost-saving tool but as a strategic element of brand communication. While transparency regarding AI use may be ethically desirable or legally necessary, indiscriminate disclosure could unintentionally weaken authenticity perceptions if not accompanied by careful message design. Managers should therefore focus on ensuring that AI-generated brand voice aligns closely with established brand values, tone, and narrative style to preserve perceived authenticity.

Moreover, the results suggest that hybrid communication strategies where AI-generated content is supervised, refined, or endorsed by human brand experts may offer a viable pathway to balancing efficiency and authenticity. By positioning AI as an assistive rather than substitutive agent in brand communication, firms may mitigate authenticity concerns while retaining the operational advantages of AI-driven content generation.

Finally, this study contributes to the broader discourse on ethical and transparent AI use in marketing. While disclosure remains a critical consideration, the findings highlight that transparency alone is insufficient to guarantee positive consumer responses. Instead, authenticity emerges as the key psychological mechanism through which consumers evaluate

AI-mediated brand communication. This insight advances the theoretical integration of AI ethics, brand authenticity, and consumer attitude formation within marketing scholarship.

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This study set out to move beyond the disclosure dilemma by examining how AI-generated brand voice influences brand authenticity and brand attitude. Drawing on experimental data and structural equation modeling, the findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychological mechanisms through which consumers evaluate AI-mediated brand communication. Overall, the results demonstrate that AI disclosure primarily affects authenticity-related perceptions, while its influence on brand attitude operates indirectly through perceived authenticity.

Summary of Findings

The results indicate that disclosure of AI-generated brand voice leads to lower perceptions of brand authenticity compared to human-generated brand voice. However, this reduction in authenticity does not translate into an immediate negative evaluation of the brand. Structural equation modeling further reveals that brand voice authenticity strongly predicts brand authenticity, which in turn plays a central role in shaping brand attitude. These findings confirm that authenticity functions as a key mediating mechanism linking message-level evaluations to overall brand judgments.

Taken together, the findings suggest that consumer responses to AI-generated brand communication are not inherently negative. Instead, they are contingent upon how authentic the brand voice is perceived to be and how closely it aligns with the brand's identity and values. This nuanced understanding challenges simplistic assumptions that AI disclosure inevitably harms brand evaluations.

Theoretical Contributions

This study makes several important contributions to the literature on brand management and AI-mediated communication. First, it extends brand authenticity theory by demonstrating that authenticity judgments operate hierarchically, beginning at the brand voice level and cascading to brand-level evaluations and attitudes. By empirically validating this mechanism in the context of AI-generated content, the study advances theoretical understanding of how authenticity is constructed in technologically mediated environments.

Second, this research contributes to the emerging literature on artificial intelligence in marketing by addressing the underexplored role of AI-generated brand voice. While prior studies have largely focused on functional interactions such as chatbots or algorithmic decision-making, this study highlights the symbolic and emotional dimensions of AI-generated communication. In doing so, it bridges the gap between AI research and branding scholarship.

Third, the findings refine existing perspectives on algorithm aversion by demonstrating that negative reactions to AI disclosure are not universal or absolute. Rather than directly diminishing brand attitude, AI disclosure affects evaluations indirectly through authenticity perceptions, thereby underscoring the importance of mediating psychological processes in consumer–AI interactions.

Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, the findings offer several actionable insights. First, brand managers should recognize that the strategic use of AI in brand communication requires more than technological sophistication. Ensuring that AI-generated brand voice remains authentic, coherent, and consistent with established brand identity is essential for maintaining positive consumer evaluations.

Second, while transparency regarding AI use may be ethically necessary or institutionally mandated, managers should carefully consider how disclosure is framed. Simply revealing AI authorship without reinforcing authenticity cues may weaken perceptions of brand genuineness. Firms may therefore benefit from adopting hybrid communication strategies in which AI-generated content is curated or endorsed by human brand experts.

Finally, the results suggest that AI should be positioned as an enabler of brand communication rather than a replacement for human creativity. By integrating AI into brand storytelling in a way that complements human judgment, organizations can leverage the efficiency of AI while preserving the authenticity that consumers value.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that open avenues for future research. First, the experimental design relied on fictitious brands to control for prior brand knowledge, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to real-world branding contexts. Future studies could replicate the model using established brands across different industries.

Second, this research focused on a single form of brand communication. Future research could examine how AI-generated brand voice performs across various channels, such as social media, advertising campaigns, or long-form brand storytelling. Additionally, cultural differences in perceptions of AI and authenticity warrant further investigation, particularly in non-Western contexts.

Finally, future studies may explore moderating variables such as consumer innovativeness, trust in technology, or perceived brand transparency to further refine understanding of when and for whom AI-generated brand voice is most effective.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the impact of AI-generated brand voice extends beyond a simple disclosure dilemma. Authenticity emerges as the central mechanism through which consumers interpret and evaluate AI-mediated brand communication. As artificial intelligence continues to shape the future of marketing, understanding how to balance technological innovation with authentic brand expression will remain a critical challenge for both scholars and practitioners.

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