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**VISUAL SATURATION IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI:
AI-GENERATED CONTENT AND USER ENGAGEMENT**

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The rapid development of generative AI has transformed digital media creation by enabling faster and more resource-efficient production of visual content. This has significantly increased the volume of visuals on online platforms, contributing to visual saturation – a state in which users are exposed to more information than they can effectively process. This thesis explores how AI-generated content influences user engagement and examines psychological aspects of perception, including trust, authenticity, and perceived quality. The study suggests that excessive reliance on automated visuals may reduce attention and weaken brand credibility, highlighting the need to balance AI tools with human creativity for effective communication.

In recent years, society has witnessed the rapid development of artificial intelligence technologies, which is considered to be the beginning of a new technological era. Today, AI is significantly changing the way people perform different tasks. What is particularly surprising is that AI is now capable not only of solving problems that require logical thinking, data analysis, and calculation, but also tasks that traditionally were associated with creativity. Modern AI tools can generate images, produce written texts, and process audio information. As a result, the way people understand creativity and build their creative processes is transforming. One of the areas that has already experienced significant changes is digital marketing. Although AI simplifies the process of creating media materials, it also introduces new challenges [1].

Previously, content creation required significant time, effort, and professional skills from marketers, designers, and copywriters. Today many stages of this process can be automated with the help of AI technologies. By implementing AI tools in content production, it has become easier to analyze user preferences, personalize communication, and increase the speed of content delivery. At the same time, social media platforms were already saturated with visual media uploaded by users even before the usage of generative AI.

While AI reduces the time and resources required to produce media content, it also increases the overall amount of content online. As a result, it becomes increasingly difficult for individual posts to stand out in users' feeds. When audiences are exposed to more personalized and visually attractive content than they can realistically process, these qualities gradually lose their value and the level of user engagement decreases. Another important contributing factor to this process is the accessibility of AI-based tools. When OpenAI introduced the

chatbot ChatGPT in November 2022, it provided free access to generative AI technologies regardless of users' professional skills. Since then, the number of similar tools and their users has grown rapidly. Today almost anyone can generate visual content from a simple text prompt within minutes and publish it on social media platforms [2].

This opportunity has been actively used not only by individual users but also by small and medium-sized businesses. Companies at early stages of development often need to invest a considerable part of their budget in marketing, which many entrepreneurs cannot afford. In this context, AI becomes an attractive alternative. Another important aspect concerns how users psychologically react to such media. When people realize that visual materials are produced automatically, they may begin questioning their authenticity and reliability. In some situations, they think they are interacting with authentic content but later discover that it was generated by AI [3].

Constant exposure to similar AI-generated visuals can lead users to associate such content with low-effort production or automated promotion strategies. Many users on social media openly state that they would be less likely to purchase a product or use a service if promotional materials appear to be generated by AI. For them, such visuals may signal lower reliability and product quality [4]. In an already overloaded feed, this often leads users to simply ignore such content. For this reason, in the age of generative AI it becomes especially important to approach content creation more responsibly. While AI technologies accelerate and simplify production processes, creators, marketers, and businesses should consider not only efficiency but also trust, authenticity, and the quality of visual communication. A balanced use of AI together with human creativity may help reduce the negative effects of visual saturation and maintain meaningful engagement between brands and their audiences.

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