# Trust in Generative AI: Multi-Stakeholder Perspective in the Context of UK Marketing

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**Abstract:** This paper presents an investigation into the trust dynamics in the use of generative AI (genAI) within the Advertising and Marketing sector in the UK, emphasising a multi-stakeholder perspective. An aspect that remains largely under researched, but that recently has been noted as important (InnovateUK, 2024) is the need to understand these issues from multiple perspectives. The current literature on AI and GenAI typically focuses exclusively on one group of individuals, which one argues to be the incorrect approach. This narrow focus overlooks the complexity of trust-related challenges and how these manifest when multiple groups are involved. To bridge this gap, research should explore trust extensively across multiple stakeholder groups to elucidate the intricate challenges of integrating GenAI in the context provided. Correspondingly, the aim of this research is to examine how trust is perceived, developed, and influenced from a multi-stakeholder perspective. An interpretivist approach was adopted, and data collection was conducted using qualitative methods. Due to the subjective and contextual nature of trust, a research approach that promotes a flexible and open-minded view of knowledge is better suited. Because the nature of this research entails observation beyond quantifiability, a qualitative approach was deemed the most appropriate methodology. Preliminary findings from social media observation and semi-structured interviews reveal nuanced links between regulatory frameworks and trust levels, and some participant's views and attitudes echo the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Semantic ambiguities around AI terminology, concerns about job displacement, industry impact, data uniformity, and censorship also emerged. Notably, ChatGPT was described not as a replacement but as a collaborative tool. Building upon these discoveries, the researcher plans to investigate further through focus groups and semi-structured interviews. The research aims to achieve three key outcomes: (1) Identify factors impacting GenAI from a multi-stakeholder; (2) Offer a holistic perspective of trust in the genAI ecosystem; and (3) Conceptualisation of a trust-based framework to address GenAI-related applications in the Advertising and Marketing sector.

**Keywords:** Generative AI, Multi-Stakeholder Perspective, Trust Dynamics, Advertising and Marketing, Technology Acceptance

## 1. Introduction

Comparable to the complexity of the human mind, generative artificial intelligence (genAI) has seen an exponential growth in its research and development across multiple disciplines. It is important to distinguish between AI and genAI, the latter being a type of artificial intelligence. In the context of this research, genAI is defined as an algorithm-based tool used to generate content (Ali et al., 2021; McKinsey, 2023). Due to its recent introduction to society, genAI has raised more questions than answers, and its role in the contemporary world is not yet defined. With some accepting and promoting its implementation and others distrusting the technology, there is a clear need to examine how to approach and maximise the human-genAI relationship.

Some of the main concerns surrounding the technology include job displacement, lack of regulations, and general apprehensions about misinformation (Khosrowi et al., 2024; Klingemann et al., 2021; Maundrill, 2023), while benefits include increase of productivity, efficiency, and overall work-life balance improvements (Dwivedi et al., 2023; InnovateUK, 2024; Leung et al., 2018). It can be argued that some of the scepticism and overall distrust of genAI originates in the belief that the perceived benefits are not sufficient to outweigh the challenges of implementing the technology (Enkel, 2024).

With the introduction of genAI to the general public and with researchers highlighting its noteworthy human-like attributes (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Esling & Devis, 2020; McKinsey, 2023; Shneiderman, 2020) it is reasonable that some may perceive it negatively, maybe even as a threat and "activate" a primal survival mechanism: trust (Seldon, 2009). Understandably, if introduced incorrectly or carelessly, genAI can cause unnecessary friction between the involved parties.

As the interest in genAI grows, more research has been dedicated to investigating the risks, challenges, and opportunities associated with it. (Ali et al., 2021; Baidoo-Anu & Owusu Ansah, 2023; Cardon et al., 2023; Dwivedi et al., 2023; Gozalo-Brizuela & Garrido-Merchan, 2023; Suzuki & Matsuo, 2022) However, the literature shows

that existing studies seem to mainly focus on one stakeholder group at a time (Donath, 2021; Kozinets & Gretzel, 2021; Leung et al., 2018; Longoni et al., 2019; Longoni & Cian, 2022; Mende et al., 2019; Puntoni et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2022), unassumingly overlooking the complex set of interactions that occur within a stakeholder group, and between them. One argues that, in this context, perceptions and trust in the integration of genAI cannot be examined to its full extent. Fundamentally no research investigates how trust and perceptions among stakeholders intersect and impact the implementation of GenAI in a given context. This is congruent with the need for a human-centred approach in the development of GenAI systems, albeit current literature does not sufficiently address what this approach represents in different application contexts. Similarly, there is a need to add to the scarce empirical research regarding the concept of trust in the context of GenAI.

### 1.1 Research Aim and Objectives

To examine how trust is perceived, developed, and influenced from a multi-stakeholder perspective. As such, the following objectives have been proposed: (1) To identify the perceived role of trust and factors affecting it in the context of using genAI from a multi-stakeholder perspective, and in the context of the Marketing in the UK; (2) To understand how, and to what extent, the factors identified in objective one impact trust in genAI; (3) To determine how trust, in the context of genAI implementation, can be built, developed, and maintained across multi-stakeholders; (4) To develop strategies that can be employed to enhance trust in genAI.

## 2. Methods

The nature of this research is rooted in a subjective, ambiguous, and complex concept. To examine trust, one must consider the individuality of the participants and accept that opinions will form the basis for most of the data. For this reason, it is imperative to adopt a philosophy that allows trust to be examined in its natural environment and without interference that might skew/invalidate the data. Furthermore, one argues that the subjectivity and complexity of the research's theme demands the collection of qualitative data since quantifying subjective topics is counterproductive. This research has adopted an exclusively qualitative approach guided by constructionism and interpretivism. As this is a work in progress, the described process was adopted for preliminary data collection. The results and discussion section will provide a more detailed description on the procedure. The preliminary stage was composed of two stages: 1. Social media observation; and 2. Semi-structured Interviews.

### 2.1 Social Media Observation

This was conducted on X. Consent was implicitly obtained due to X's policies on private data and how it can be used once it is considered public domain. Convenience sampling was employed, and sampling size was not established at this stage. Instead, the researcher closely monitored data saturation. The data was collected using Octoparse and then exported to excel. Sentiment analysis was conducted using SentiStrenght, and the data was imported into Nvivo for further analysis.

### 2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Three semi-structured interviews were conducted. The researcher expects to observe Warrens' (2002) rule and conduct between 30 to 40 interviews for the final study (depending on saturation). Convenience sampling was employed and the participants were all marketing professionals employed at the researcher's university. At this stage, the main objective of the interviews was to evaluate the efficiency of the developed interview questions. The necessary processes were followed to obtain consent as per the university's regulations. Participants were initially asked the same questions but as the interview progressed, the researcher adapted the line of questioning.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Social Media Observation

The aim was to observe online discussion about AI and GenAI to understand the public opinion on the subject. From the 8120 tweets collected (reduced to 6294 once duplicates were accounted for and removed), 49% were mixed/neutral, 21% were negative, and 29% were positive. Using Nvivo, a general word search was conducted

and then netnographic techniques (such as abstracting, contrasting, and generalising) were employed to derive themes.

The main themes derived from the keywords included:

ChatGPT – the tool has become synonyms with AI and genAI.

New (novelty) and create – the technology is seen as innovative but there is also debate surrounding what it means to create something new.

Art – potential introduction of a new type of art (AI art and AI artists) which can lead to the disruption of the skilled-based hierarchy in creative industries.

Work –job losses and creation, upskilling;

Creativity – keyword is associated with productivity, augmenting, amplifying which suggests a support-based role.

Albeit interesting, the results of this particular method warranted a deeper and more meaningful investigation. Ultimately, the researcher decided to not move forward with social media observation. The method was too time-consuming and resource-intensive for the study's scope and prioritising it did not fit the research timeline established. This method was deemed more suitable as a primary method for a different study.

### 3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The main themes derived included:

- Regularisation;
- AI and genAI definitions – participants used both interchangeably which denotes an inability to differentiate the two concepts;
- Intent to use directly connected to TAM;
- Change of role/loss of jobs;
- Trust.

As theorised, the trust theme was present in all interviews in particular when participants discussed the regularisation of AI/genAI. It can be argued that this type of trust comes from a pre-established trust in the institution or governmental body in question. It is, therefore, transferable and based on perceptions of trustworthiness. One can theorise than in groups in which AI/genAI knowledge is low, this transferable trust might be the main source of influence (for intent to trust). The overall concerns surrounding the use of AI and genAI were consistent with those identified in the literature review and social media observation. Additionally, it appears that ChatGPT has becomes synonyms with genAI and AI. Lastly, the interviews highlighted the need to adopt a multi-stakeholder approach to examine the interactions between AI/genAI and individuals. Although some opinions were shared between participants, there were some noteworthy divergent opinions.

## 4. Conclusion

The preliminary findings highlight the need to examine trust from a multi-stakeholder perspective and further emphasise its subjective nature. Albeit the findings from the social media observation were deemed unsuitable for this particular study, it is important to note the importance of conducting observation on such a polarising topic. It seems that trust in genAI is not only shaped and influenced by its technological abilities but also by what it is perceived as. In other words, how it is marketed can play a significant role in shaping perceptions and subsequent trust in genAI tools. The researcher argues that introducing genAI tools as collaborative tools (rather than task replacements) can be an effective way to shift perceptions. As this is a work-in-progress, the researcher will continue with data collection and further examine and explore the conclusions here highlighted.

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