



From Personalisation to Agentic Campaigns: Modern Marketing Techniques Using Artificial Intelligence in the Indian Context

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) has moved from a peripheral experimentation tool to a central operating layer of marketing practice in India, reshaping how brands segment audiences, create content, buy media, and optimise the customer journey. This paper examines modern AI-enabled marketing techniques as they are being applied in the Indian context, including hyper-personalisation using zero-party and behavioural data, generative AI for scaled content and creative production, predictive analytics for campaign optimisation, AI-driven programmatic advertising, and the emergence of autonomous "agentic" marketing systems capable of planning and executing campaigns with limited human intervention. Drawing on industry survey data, marketing-technology vendor reporting, and Indian regulatory sources, the paper finds that Indian marketers are adopting these techniques rapidly but unevenly, with most organisations still in an experimentation phase even as leading brands report measurable gains in conversion rates, customer acquisition cost, and content production speed. The paper also examines India's fast-evolving regulatory response, including the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, the Advertising Standards Council of India's disclosure requirements for AI-generated content and AI-driven influencer marketing, and the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules 2026 governing synthetic media labelling. The paper concludes that while AI offers Indian marketers substantial gains in personalisation, efficiency, and

reach, particularly given India's linguistic diversity and mobile-first consumer base, sustainable adoption depends on maintaining data-quality discipline, authentic brand voice, and rigorous compliance with an increasingly detailed disclosure and consent framework.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, digital marketing, India, personalisation, generative AI, programmatic advertising, agentic AI, ASCI, DPDP Act, influencer marketing

Introduction

Marketing in India has historically balanced mass-media reach with the country's extraordinary linguistic, regional, and economic diversity, a balancing act that made truly individualised communication prohibitively expensive at scale for most of the digital advertising era. The rapid maturation of artificial intelligence (AI) tools since 2023, spanning machine-learning-based prediction, generative content creation, and increasingly autonomous "agentic" systems, has begun to close that gap. With India's internet user base now estimated at roughly 950 million people and mobile commerce continuing to expand into smaller towns, Indian marketers are deploying AI not merely as a productivity add-on but as what industry commentary increasingly describes as the foundational operating layer of digital marketing itself.



This paper examines the modern marketing techniques enabled by AI as they are being adopted in the Indian context. It addresses three questions: first, which specific AI-enabled marketing techniques, personalisation, generative content creation, predictive analytics, programmatic advertising, and agentic campaign management, are most actively used by Indian brands and agencies; second, what evidence exists on the business impact of these techniques; and third, how has India's regulatory and self-regulatory apparatus, including the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDP Act) and the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), responded to the risks these techniques introduce. The paper argues that AI is enabling a shift in Indian marketing from mass, one-size-fits-all messaging toward hyper-personalised, predictively optimised, and increasingly autonomous campaign execution, but that adoption remains uneven across the market and is now subject to a rapidly tightening disclosure and data-protection framework.

Literature Review and Industry Context

Industry survey data indicate that Indian marketing organisations are still largely in an early or experimental stage of AI adoption despite widespread enthusiasm. A state-of-AI-in-marketing study conducted by the Marketing + Media Alliance (MMA) India found that 42 percent of respondent organisations described themselves as being in the experimentation phase of adopting AI in their marketing strategies, with only 21.5 percent rating their level of AI inclusion as high and 33.6 percent rating it as medium, while 39 percent of organisations reported being in the process of developing strategies specifically to address AI-related risks. This pattern of enthusiastic but early-stage adoption is broadly consistent with global survey findings; Adobe's 16th annual AI and Digital Trends research, based on surveys of thousands of executives and practitioners, found that although most organisations report having foundational infrastructure such as cloud technology and shared customer data platforms in place, only a minority say generative AI is integrated across multiple marketing functions, with fewer still describing organisation-wide embedding of the technology.

Academic and industry literature on personalisation underscores its centrality to modern marketing strategy. Analysis cited in industry reporting attributes to McKinsey the finding that leading companies generate substantially more revenue from personalisation efforts than average performers, and that a large majority of consumers now expect tailored experiences, with many expressing frustration when such expectations are unmet. Complementary Indian industry commentary reports that brands personalising campaigns with AI have observed conversion rates two to three times higher than one-size-fits-all approaches, and that automated AI-driven media buying has been associated with markedly lower cost-per-lead outcomes in some Indian case examples. A parallel and increasingly prominent theme in the literature is Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO), the practice of structuring brand content so that it is cited by AI-powered answer engines such as ChatGPT, Google's AI Overviews, and Perplexity, reflecting a broader industry expectation that a substantial share of consumer information-seeking will shift from traditional search results toward AI-generated answers.

Methodology

This paper adopts a qualitative, document-based research design appropriate to a fast-moving and only partially studied area of marketing practice. It draws on industry survey reports, including MMA India's state-of-AI-in-marketing study and Adobe's Digital Trends research, marketing-technology vendor and agency case commentary describing Indian brand implementations, and Indian regulatory and self-regulatory sources, including the DPDP Act, ASCI's influencer and AI-in-advertising guidelines, and the 2026 amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules. Because much of the available evidence on AI marketing outcomes in India originates from marketing agencies and technology vendors with a commercial interest in promoting AI adoption, this paper treats specific performance claims (for example, particular percentage improvements in conversion rate or cost-per-lead) as indicative industry reporting rather than independently audited results, a limitation discussed further below.



Findings and Discussion

Hyper-Personalisation and the Shift to Zero-Party Data

The most widely cited AI marketing technique in the Indian context is hyper-personalisation, the use of machine learning to tailor content, offers, and user interfaces to individual consumers in real time based on behavioural, contextual, and preference data. Industry commentary describes this moving well beyond inserting a customer's name into an email subject line: AI systems now analyse browsing history, purchase patterns, location, and real-time contextual signals, such as local weather, to dynamically alter website content, product recommendations, and app interfaces for individual users, with one frequently cited example being an e-commerce homepage that automatically emphasises winter coats for a user in Delhi while showing breathable cottons to a user browsing from Chennai at the same moment.

This shift toward personalisation is occurring alongside a parallel and significant change in the underlying data model. With third-party cookies effectively phased out of major browsers, Indian marketing literature describes a decisive shift toward zero-party data, that is, data that consumers provide directly and voluntarily through mechanisms such as interactive quizzes, preference centres, and polls conducted on platforms including Instagram and WhatsApp. This shift is presented in Indian industry commentary as both a privacy-compliance necessity and a data-quality improvement, since information a customer volunteers directly is considered more reliable than behavioural inference. India's linguistic diversity adds a distinctive local dimension to personalisation: several Indian marketing agencies report using AI to launch advertising campaigns across more than twenty Indian languages simultaneously, with the objective not merely of literal translation but of producing culturally resonant messaging adapted to regional tastes, for instance adjusting visual colour palettes differently for South Indian audiences based on AI-driven performance testing.

Generative AI for Content and Creative Production

Generative AI tools have substantially compressed the time and cost required to produce advertising creative in the Indian market. Industry case commentary describes agencies using generative image and video tools, including platforms such as Leonardo, Canva AI, and Eleven Labs for AI voiceover and dubbing work, to produce multiple creative variants of a single advertisement rapidly; one agency reports generating eight distinct ad video variants for a solar energy brand within five days, a process reported to have cut production time by roughly 80 percent while improving measured ad performance. More broadly, Indian marketing commentary describes a shift from campaigns that once required weeks of production to campaigns that can go live within hours, with AI systems used to scale content variation testing across audience segments, visual styles, and messaging angles without proportional increases in human production resources.

This capacity for rapid content generation is, however, increasingly viewed alongside a countervailing concern about authenticity. Industry analysts caution that as AI-generated content proliferates, audiences are expected to shift from passive content consumption toward more conscious filtering and verification, increasing the premium on demonstrable brand authenticity and human-directed brand voice, even as production itself becomes AI-assisted. This tension between AI-enabled content volume and audience demand for authenticity is a recurring theme across both global and Indian-specific marketing commentary reviewed for this paper.

Predictive Analytics and Programmatic Advertising

Beyond personalisation and content generation, AI is used extensively in India for predictive audience targeting and automated media buying. Indian performance-marketing agencies describe using AI models to estimate a given user's "conversion probability" before an advertisement is served, allowing budget to be allocated toward the audience segments statistically most likely to convert rather than distributed on a broader, less targeted basis. This predictive approach is reported to allow the same underlying algorithms to differentiate targeting strategies at a granular geographic level, for example forecasting which advertising creative will perform best for a metropolitan



neighbourhood in Delhi as compared with a smaller town in Bihar, reflecting India's wide variation in purchasing power, media consumption habits, and language preference across urban and non-metro markets.

Programmatic advertising, in which AI systems place real-time bids for digital ad inventory across platforms such as Meta and Google, has similarly moved toward greater autonomy. Case commentary from Indian digital marketing agencies describes AI systems that automatically identify the best-performing creative and targeting combinations across live campaigns, adjusting bids and creative pairings continuously rather than relying on periodic manual review, with some agencies reporting cost-per-lead reductions of up to 40 percent for brands adopting AI-driven media buying relative to more manually managed campaigns.

Agentic AI and the Move Toward Autonomous Marketing

The most recent and structurally significant development in AI marketing, both globally and in India, is the emergence of agentic AI: systems capable of planning multi-step actions and executing them with limited direct human instruction, in contrast to earlier generative or predictive tools that primarily assisted rather than acted. Global survey data cited in industry literature indicate that a majority of surveyed companies in the Asia-Pacific region, which includes India, expressed confidence in using AI agents to expand workforce capacity within the coming year, and that companies in this region were comparatively more likely to treat AI as an active thought partner in planning and decision-making rather than purely as a command-based tool. In marketing specifically, agentic systems are beginning to handle tasks such as autonomously managing advertising bids, orchestrating multi-channel campaign sequencing, and delegating elements of purchasing-decision support to AI agents acting on a consumer's behalf, a development framed in industry literature as extending hyper-personalisation from passive content matching toward active, agent-mediated commerce.

For Indian marketers, this shift also intersects with the aforementioned move toward Generative Engine Optimisation, since AI agents and AI-powered search and shopping assistants increasingly mediate how Indian consumers discover brands in the first instance. Industry commentary suggests that as a growing share of information-seeking shifts from traditional search engine results toward direct answers generated by AI systems, brand visibility within AI-generated responses is becoming as commercially important as conventional search engine ranking, prompting Indian marketing agencies to begin auditing and restructuring web content specifically to be more easily cited by AI systems.

Regulatory and Self-Regulatory Response

India's regulatory and self-regulatory response to AI-driven marketing has developed rapidly, particularly around data protection, AI-generated content disclosure, and influencer marketing. The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDP Act) establishes the overarching legal framework governing how marketers may collect, process, and share personal data used to power AI-driven personalisation and targeting, requiring valid consent and a data privacy notice before customer data gathered for campaign analytics or mailing-list purposes can be used or shared with third parties. Building on this foundation, India's Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules 2026 require that synthetically generated content, that is, AI-generated audio, video, or images, be labelled with a visible watermark and disclosure tag, with guidance specifying that such watermarks should cover a meaningful proportion of the visual surface of affected content.

The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has layered additional, marketing-specific obligations onto this legal baseline. ASCI's updated guidelines require that AI-generated images, videos, or audio used in advertising be clearly disclosed, that AI-generated testimonials or endorsements be explicitly identified as such, and that influencers using AI filters that materially alter their appearance disclose both the commercial relationship, using established tags such as sponsorship or paid-partnership labels, and the fact of AI enhancement. For AI-generated virtual influencers specifically, ASCI's 2026 guidance requires a clear, prominent, on-screen disclosure that the persona is virtual, appearing within the first five seconds of any video content longer than fifteen seconds and meeting minimum font-size and contrast requirements, alongside a prohibition on virtual personas making sensory claims, such as describing the texture or scent of a product, that they cannot plausibly have experienced. ASCI's enforcement is supported by its National Advertising Monitoring Service, which uses automated tools to scan social media content for disclosure



violations; the council reported processing 1,409 influencer-related violations through November 2025, with 94 percent involving disclosure failures, and enforcement action can escalate to the Central Consumer Protection Authority, which holds statutory power to impose penalties of up to Rs 10 lakh on individuals and Rs 50 lakh on entities for misleading advertisements.

Risks and Limitations

Several risks and limitations qualify the picture presented above. First, much of the quantitative evidence on AI marketing effectiveness in India, such as specific conversion-rate multipliers or cost-per-lead reductions, originates from marketing agencies and technology vendors describing their own client results, and has not been independently audited or replicated in peer-reviewed research; such figures should be read as indicative industry claims rather than settled empirical findings. Second, survey data suggest a meaningful gap between marketing enthusiasm for AI and actual organisational maturity, with a large share of Indian and global companies still describing themselves as being in an experimentation phase, meaning that widely publicised case studies of successful AI marketing implementation may not yet be representative of the broader market. Third, the regulatory environment governing AI in Indian advertising, spanning the DPDP Act, the 2026 IT Rules amendments on synthetic media, and ASCI's evolving AI-in-advertising guidelines, some of which remained in draft and open for public consultation as of mid-2026, is still being finalised, meaning compliance obligations for Indian marketers using AI are likely to continue evolving. Finally, growing consumer sophistication in recognising AI-generated content, combined with tightening disclosure requirements, suggests that some current AI marketing practices may require significant adjustment as enforcement intensifies and public tolerance for undisclosed synthetic content declines.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence has become a foundational, rather than merely supplementary, layer of marketing practice in India, reshaping how brands personalise messaging, produce creative content, allocate advertising budgets, and, increasingly, delegate campaign execution to autonomous agentic systems. India's scale, mobile-first consumer base, and extraordinary linguistic diversity make it a market particularly well suited to AI-driven personalisation at scale, and early industry evidence suggests meaningful gains in conversion rates, customer acquisition costs, and content production speed for brands that have adopted these techniques effectively. At the same time, adoption remains uneven, with a large share of Indian marketing organisations still in an early, experimental stage of AI integration, and the evidentiary basis for many publicised performance claims rests on vendor and agency reporting rather than independent verification. India's regulatory and self-regulatory apparatus, spanning the DPDP Act, the 2026 IT Rules amendments on synthetic media labelling, and ASCI's increasingly detailed AI and influencer disclosure guidelines, has responded rapidly to the risks this technology introduces, positioning transparency and consent as prerequisites for sustainable AI-driven marketing rather than optional best practice. Future research would benefit from independently audited, longitudinal studies of AI marketing performance across Indian brands of varying size and sector, and from consumer-facing research examining how growing AI literacy among Indian audiences is shifting trust and purchase behaviour in response to increasingly prevalent AI-generated marketing content.

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