AI -Powered Audience Engagement: Unleashing the Potential for Personalised Experience

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Abstract—**The rapid expansion of media outlets since last few decades has brought revolution not only in the way information is disseminated, but also the way it is consumed, and interpreted. Gone are the days when media audience were exposed to media content in passively. With the emergence of internet media landscape has also changed significantly. Availability of multiple media outlets enables audience to engage with the media content which they like. They "invest time, attention, and emotion" with the content they (Lehmann, Lalmas, Elad, & Dupret[1], 2012, p. 164) and internalize a media message aligning with their interest. The artificial intelligence by analysing the media audience behaviour like their media content consumption, comment, like and share and their browsing history can suggest media to create content and personalise it for audience accordingly. This paper focuses on audience engagement and the role of AI in assisting media to tailor made message for their audience. It is a qualitative research based on secondary data.**

Index Terms—**Artificial, Audience, Digital, Engagement, Intelligence, Media**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Proliferation of media channels, audience fragmentation and demassification furthered by intense digital and social transformation since last few decades has changed drastically the way information is disseminated and consumed. Researchers found it difficult to attract the attention of distracted audiences, who can switch over different screens and platforms and has prompted growing concern over finding ways to enhance audience engagement levels and seeking emotional connection (Chan-Olmsted & Wolter[2], 2018; Edlom[3], 2022; Gajardo & Costera[4], 2022; Kleer & Kunz[5], 2021).

Media users are no longer passive consumers. Expansion of type of media available (smartphone, tablet computer, television) there upon making the content attractive depending on the screen further influences the consumption of media content (Guerrero, Diego, and Kimber, 2017). Viewers do not passively consume media content.

Digital technology has changed the game in every business organization including media sector. In order to attract and engage customers media organizations are leaving no stone unturned and artificial intelligence has great potential to analyze big data to understand the audience preferences, consumption habits and behaviour to alienate the content with their interests and needs. This research paper focuses on audience engagement, targeting with the help of artificial intelligence.

A. Objectives of studies:
- To study what actually means audience engagement.
- To study the importance of audience engagement
- To study the stages of audience engagement
- To study how AI can help in audience engagement

II. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Discussion on audience engagement has substantially increased for the last few years (Broersma[7], 2019).and it may be different for different industries.

According to the literature on the entertainment industry, engagement is a positive evaluation of the content by consumers. Since media products are intangible goods, they are connected to the minds of the audience; the more connected, the closer to identification (Mayer[8], 2011)). In this context, engagement is the aesthetic experience created by media products when consumers really enjoy consuming them. (Evans[9] (2019), O'Brien[10](2008), Urgellés[11](2017). This pleasant experience allows

users to engage in events and experiences other than the passive consumption of content, such as acquiring by-products or engaging in communications with peers. (O'Brien & Toms[12], 2008; Stephen & Galak[13], 2012).

A. Research design:

The present study is qualitative research based on Survey method of data collection. Secondary data published in reports have been used.

III. ANALYSIS

A. What is audience engagement:

There is no consensus among academicians, the news industry and professional journalists on what engagement actually encompass and how it should be measured.

It is a multidimensional concept that entails factors like attention, interest, involvement, and interaction. This is important because it determines how much the audience will understand, process, and act on the information presented.

Audience engagement, also known as user engagement, is the cognitive, emotional or affective experience a user has with media content or a brand. It means deliberately and attentively listening, viewing or reading news the concept assumes that users are entranced by a brand, news application or media content. Such psychological experiences would lead users to use it for longer periods of time and more intensively. They would also encourage user loyalty, attention and thought formation.

It is also described as the action taken by audience after being exposed to certain piece of information. Mike Piddock[14] defined the term as "providing an outlet for audiences to interact with, be it through an empowered presenter or a physical stimulus. It is making sure you don't presume the attention of your attendees for the duration of your event – they're only human, and their concentration will waver without a reason to focus".

It is interaction of audience with content, like blogs, video, and post on social media or any other form of content. It means not just consuming content passively, but actively engaging with it through comments, likes, shares, and other forms of engagement.

B. Why Audience engagement is important?

1. Number matters:
   It is essential for audience engagement that audience first visit the media content. Essentially large audience leverages the business and the content can be viral

2. Gaining attention and maintaining interest:
   Engaged audience pay more attention and consequently will maintain their interest throughout the communication process. This will result in retaining and recalling the information presented Additionally, engaged audiences are more likely to share the content with their peers, further amplifying the reach and impact of the message (Berger & Milkman[15], 2012).

3. Interaction:
   Engaged audiences are more likely to question, analyses, and evaluate the content they consume, leading to a deeper understanding of media messages and their potential implications (Livingstone[16], 2004).

4. Critical Thinking and Behavioural changes:
   "Engaging the audience encourages active participation and critical thinking, which are essential components of media literacy" (Hobbs[17], 2010)

5. Behaviour change
   Engaging the audience is a crucial step in promoting behaviour change, as it increases the likelihood that they will internalise the message and apply it to their lives (Petty & Cacioppo[18], 1986).

6. Expectation:
   Once people engage with the content, they need to be included in the process. This means that customer engagement boosts expectation because groups of people value approval. Put another way, people will look forward to something if they know they're going to be included in it. Gathering people expectation means that there's no question that people will pay attention to what you're showing them. If they pay attention, they'll stick around. It's a very positive cycle that most people would love.

IV. STAGES OF AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT:

Researchers have, identified four stages in the process of engagement (O'Brien & Toms, 2008; Oh, Bellur, & Sundar[19], 2010).
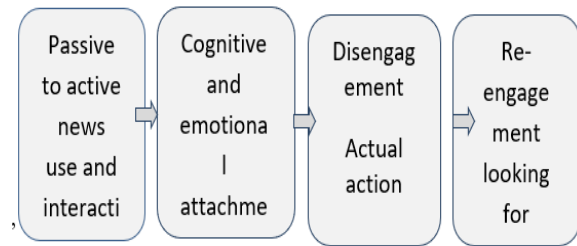
A. First Stage:

In the first stage of engagement passive news consumption translates into active news use and users decide to interact with media content. This could be via different interfaces such as the television screen, the newspaper page, the mobile phone, or a website and involves various practices such as reading, clicking, or watching. The design of the interface, the interests and motivations of the user, and their goals determine if they engage with content.

B. Second Stage:

Cognitive and/or emotional attachment to media content takes places at second stage which may be called as. actual engagement, here users put effort and energy to comprehend and interpret news texts on the basis of their existing knowledge and integrating them in cognitive frameworks.

C. Third Stage:

According to experts the third stage is also to as disengagement when users are not investing time and attention in a specific news item. This could be due to reasons on the psychological level such as negative effect, or on the contextual level when users, are interrupted. In this stage actual behavior takes place like posting a comment or sharing content which may further lead to a fourth stage of reengagement.

D. Fourth Stage:

Re-engagement means engagement again with similar media content like following a hyperlink for more detail or to read new related article or searching similar information on internet.
User engagement is thus a continuous process that builds up to meaning-making, value creation, and connecting to public discourses. (O'Brien & Toms, 2008; Oh, Bellur, & Sundar, 2010).

E. AI can help in audience engagement:

AI can play a pivotal role in media and entertainment industry. AI as define by Alan Turing[20] is a "systems that act like humans." It combines computer science and datasets, which helps in solving problem. Based on Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing and other languages computers is trained to perform specific tasks by processing large amounts of data and recognizing patterns in the data.
Content creation and personalization are the major areas where AI can affect media and entertainment majorly. AI algorithms analyse vast amounts of data to create customize content to specific audiences. Machine learning programs of AI analyses the user viewing history, their preferences and behaviour and give personalized content suggestions with an advanced recommendation algorithm For example, Netflix uses machine learning algorithms and recommend content to users,
Disney Plus is also using AI algorithms to provide customized recommendations, and increasing user engagement.
The precise AI-powered directions enhance user experience and enable media and entertainment applications to thrive. The AI integration within media and entertainment is revolutionizing content creation and consumption and driving innovation.

V. CONCLUSION

In the era of only conventional media, the audience was largely taken for granted. With the surfacing of the Internet, media and advertising industry are giving utmost importance to audience engagement. The new technologies and internet have brought viable changes in the functioning of media. It also has empowered and enabled the media audience to see, listen or read what they want. The artificial intelligence has tremendous potential to help media in engaging audience by providing them customized content aligning their interest and preference. Though its power has not been harnessed completely but future lies in artificial intelligence.

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