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LEADERSHIP AND HOW DIGITAL EMPATHY CAN DEFEAT REAL-TIME ENMITY

LEADERSHIP



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Leadership and how digital empathy can defeat real-time enmity

Tomorrow's leaders are harnessing ESG and AI – particularly artificial empathy' - to better understand how the TikTok Generation tick, according to Dr Shasha Lu of the Cambridge Judge Business School



Navigating the business world

How do tomorrow's leaders navigate a business world where change is the only constant and strategies from marketing to recruitment and retention are seemingly in conflict with the attention span of an increasingly fragmented demographic?

How do you gel with Gen Z or understand how the TikTok generation tick? How does a previously analogue world embrace today's digital reality where customer insights are increasingly manifested in millions of moving pictures rather than written reviews?

Such nimble navigation requires leadership that has probably not existed before – the kind where the focus is on both people and planet and ethics over ego and where 'doing the right thing' for the organisation aligns with a greater good as exemplified by broader ESG principles rather than the idiosyncrasy of the individual.

An exponent of the management model advocated by consultant Peter Drucker, Professor Sasha Lu, Associate Professor of Marketing at Cambridge Judge Business School, recognises that **"Good leaders ask what needs to be done and what's right for the organisation, not what I want to do."**

The Role of ESG

ESG also plays an increasingly important role in the modern leadership debate as it requires those in charge or aspiring to greatness to adapt to changes on a macro and micro-economic level in terms of a business response to climate change, diversity and inclusion and transparency.

Indeed, good leadership creates a sense of belonging in a changing world where recruitment, retention and investment are not only based upon lean and green principles but a growing and shared sense of belonging and adoption or more ethical values where 'doing the right thing' is the common denominator and a perfect exemplar of Peter Drucker's leadership mantra.

This less egocentric approach is not only more representative of the 'Gen Z' candidates businesses are actively seeking to recruit and retain, but also a new generation of ethical investor looking for C-suite strategies that promote positive diversity and inclusion as well as sustainability in their daily operations through the active reduction of negative impacts such as excessive carbon emissions or wastage, for example.



The power of Artificial Empathy

The use of technology to harness the data-rich insights

Prof. Lu, an expert in digital marketing and the academic programme director of the Cambridge General Management Programme for Cambridge Judge Business School, Executive Education also argues that modern 'greatness' must embrace 'agility over fragility' in the greater use of technology to harness the data-rich insights presented by a fragmented social media landscape where the audio-visual (AV) 'likes' and 'heated hashtags' can better inform a business's understanding of customers it seeks to serve.

Professor Lu argues that leaders should leverage technologies such as Artificial Empathy, a emergent field within AI, to extract and interpret nuanced intelligence related to preferences that remain largely untapped in what could be termed as an 'audio-visual afterlife'.



Businesses, she argues, are missing out on the opportunities to use this information to gain better "customer insights, understand customer preference, improve customer experience, discover unmet needs and optimise marketing effectiveness" she says the challenge is beyond human endeavour but within the remit of AI.

"In one minute, there are about 700,000 hours of videos watched and 500 hours of videos uploaded on YouTube, 243,000 photos uploaded on Facebook and 400,000 hours of music listened to on Spotify,"

It's almost impossible for human beings to process this amount of information, argues Professor Lu, the co-author of a study entitled "Audio and Visual Analytics in Marketing and Artificial Empathy"

With the ability to take a photo or hit record on your mobile phone, and the popularity of digital platforms such as TikTok, Facebook and YouTube, more and more images, video, and audio are being created every day. But there has been a lack of coordination in ways businesses utilise this AV data, so the new study recommends ways audio and visual analytics can be better tapped by marketers to improve business practices in communication, decision making, employee recruitment and other areas.

A new kind of leadership

The new kind of leadership is the key to better co-ordination through the harnessing of new technology.

“With the increasing use of online channels in the business sector, more and more customer interactions happen in an environment where firms have less control. The access to audio visual (AV) data and analytical tools not only gives the firms ‘eyes’ and ‘ears’ but also ‘keys’ to unlock the benefits of analytics-based decision making,” she says.

The main objective of AV data analytics is to convert audio or visual data into a structured form to extract useful information.

Consumers sharing their profiles, experiences, and thoughts in the forms of images and videos on social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Tumblr, and Flickr are also particularly valuable. For example, the images or video posted by a customer about their experience in a hotel can be more revealing about their preferences than just a rating.

Executive education programmes such as those provided by the Cambridge Judge Business School are tailored for the new leaders of tomorrow, ensuring they are attuned to both ESG principles and their organization’s immediate needs.

These leaders require the critical reasoning tools to understand when to allow AI to do the heavy lifting, particularly in the realm of digital data democratization and the ability to tap into the rich tapestry of AE and behavioural economics as presented by the endless streams of AV content that are simply a swipe or a like away.



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