

THE TRADE-OFFS OF CHATGPT TO FILIPINO FREELANCE CONTENT WRITERS: A DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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With today's technology, things we struggled to do before have become much easier to accomplish. Artificial Intelligence (AI), for one, is the latest innovation that has changed the landscape of many industries, most notably the field of content writing. AI language models like ChatGPT have garnered attention for their capacity to generate text resembling human language and engage with user queries. This technology has the potential to alter how content is going to be produced moving forward, and content writers are said to be heavily affected. Using a qualitative approach, this study used the Diffusion of Innovation Theory developed by Everett M. Rogers in 1962 to understand how Filipino freelance content writers adopted the advent of ChatGPT, find out at what stage by which they have adopted it, and know the factors that influence their adoption. Out of five established adopter categories, the content writers were classified into three categories: innovators, early majority, and late majority. Innovators are the writers who tried the innovation first. The early majority, on the other hand, adopt new ideas before the average person. Lastly, the late majority are those who will only adopt after the majority has tried it. The current stage by which the writers are currently on has been identified in the process. All of them considered themselves in the continued use of ChatGPT, and the majority said that they use AI daily for their work, which is already a part of their content writing process. The factors influencing the writers' adoption of the innovation are relative advantage, compatibility, and observability. ChatGPT has revolutionized how content writers perform their duties and responsibilities.

Keywords: Content Writing, Content Writers, ChatGPT, Artificial Intelligence, Diffusion of Innovation

INTRODUCTION

The rise of online activities in the early 1990s paved the way for the rise of content writing as an industry (This Is What the Internet Looked Like in the 1990s, 2016). In today's era, content writing has been an essential tool for companies of different industries. Big multinational companies or even small businessmen use content writing as the most effective weapon to flourish their business (Sarkhedi, 2022).

Content writing involves the creation of various forms of written material designed to engage and inform the target audience (Khanzada, 2023). "Content writers produce written content for websites, blogs, social media

platforms, marketing campaigns, and more. They focus on delivering valuable information in a way that captures attention and encourages readers to take action (para. 2)."

There are five key aspects of content writing, according to Khanzada (2023): versatility, audience engagement, SEO optimization, brand consistency, and call-to-action (CTA). Versatility refers to content writing covering various formats such as blog posts, social media updates, website copy, email newsletters, and product descriptions. Secondly, audience engagement talks about the aim of content writing: connecting with the target audience by producing engaging and relatable

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content that addresses their needs and interests. Thirdly, SEO optimization is a technique used by content writers to ensure their content ranks well in search engine results and attracts organic traffic. On the other hand, brand consistency refers to the brand's voice and tone guidelines, which the content writers must follow to maintain consistency across all written materials. Lastly, writers use CTA to connect with the target audience by producing engaging and relatable content that addresses their needs and interests.

Different types of content are presented to leads and potential clients at various points in the sales funnel. Understanding the phases of each type's performance is crucial so you can incorporate it into your strategy at the optimal time (Walters, 2022). Among the alternatives are social media posts, blog entries, product descriptions, and email marketing.

Many content writing tools were introduced to help the writers improve. Some of the most notable tools are Grammarly and Semrush. Grammarly is primarily used to check the grammar of written works before being published. On the other hand, Semrush is a tool that enables content writers to conduct proper keyword research before they write.

However, on November 30, 2022, a revolutionary innovation shook many industries, including content writing. Artificial Intelligence (AI) language model Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer, famously known as ChatGPT, has been launched to the public. Designed by OpenAI, an organization that carries out artificial intelligence research with the stated goal of creating "safe and beneficial" artificial general intelligence, the system aims to let users shape and direct a conversation towards their preferred length, format, style, level of detail, and language (Lock, 2022). It is a complex chatbot that can handle text-based requests, including simple question-answering and more difficult jobs like creating thank-you notes and resolving productivity concerns. ChatGPT can generate text that sounds like human speech and answer user questions (Thakur, 2023).

The writing profession is arguably the most affected by this recent invention, as ChatGPT can even write full scholarly dissertations (Lund &

Wang, 2023). Lund and Wang (2023) emphasized that by dividing a core theme into subtopics and having GPT write each portion, it is possible to use the program to construct an entire essay. A complete article can be written in a matter of seconds with a full version that supports more extended responses and requires little input from the researcher. This innovation could dramatically reduce the time needed to compose research essays, potentially making traditional research authors redundant (Lund & Wang, 2023).

Kalla and Smith (2023) have listed several advantages and disadvantages of ChatGPT. According to them, the advantages are its natural language generation capability, scalability, customizability, and efficiency (Kalla & Smith, 2023). Regarding the disadvantages, Kalla and Smith (2023) have ChatGPT's potential for bias in its response, need for more emotional intelligence, limited knowledge base, and lack of empathy.

Aside from the advantages and disadvantages, Vasylykiv (2023) also identified some limitations of ChatGPT. First is that ChatGPT has limitations when understanding context and background information. Another is that Chat GPT may struggle with understanding sarcasm and irony. Thirdly, it needs more common sense and general knowledge. Lastly, ChatGPT needs more ability to understand and respond to complex questions.

This study utilized Everett M. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory, or DOI, to understand how Filipino freelance content writers adopted the advent of ChatGPT, find out at what stage they adopted it, and know the factors that influenced their adoption (Khanzada, 2023). This will ultimately tell us what role ChatGPT plays in performing their duty as content writers.

DOI is derived from communication, which specifies how an idea or product gains traction over time and spreads inside a specific demographic or social system (Singer, n.d.). As a result of its distribution, people accept the new notion, deed, or product as part of their social structure. Adoption requires a person to undertake something that they have never done



before. Acceptance necessitates that the individual regard the notion, deed, or product as original or innovative, enabling proliferation.

Five adopter categories have been discovered, and although most of the general public tends to fit into the middle categories, it is still important to comprehend the traits of the target market (Rogers, 1962). Different approaches are taken to encourage innovation to appeal to various audiences of potential adopters (Diffusion of Innovation Theory, n.d.). The categories are Innovators, Early Adopters, Early Majority, Late Majority, and Laggards.

Innovators are the people who are most eager to test out the invention. They are audacious and fascinated by cutting-edge ideas. These people typically discover fresh ideas initially and are willing to take risks. To appeal to this audience, little effort is required.

Early Adopters are the individuals who act in place of opinion leaders. They like assuming leadership roles and accepting change. Given that they know the need for change, they are relatively comfortable implementing new ideas. How-to manuals and information sheets for implementation are two strategies to appeal to this group. Information won't sway them to make a change.

Although they don't always take the initiative, the Early Majority are individuals who typically act before the bulk of others. However, before they are willing to adopt an innovation, they frequently need evidence of its efficacy. To appeal to this group, several techniques include success stories and proof of the innovation's effectiveness.

Late Majority of individuals resist change and will only embrace a new concept once the majority has tried it out. One strategy to attract this audience is to provide statistics on the number of people who have tried and successfully accepted the innovation.

Lastly, Laggards are the people who are very traditional and bonded by tradition. They are the most challenging group to persuade to accept change since they oppose it. Several ways to sway this group include statistics, fear appeals, and peer pressure from other adopting groups.

Awareness of the need for an innovation, decision to adopt (or reject) the innovation, initial use of the innovation to test it, and continued use are the processes by which a person adopts an innovation and wherefore dissemination is accomplished (Singer, n.d.). He added that adopting an invention is influenced by five key elements, each present in the five adopter groups to varying degrees. These are Relative Advantage, Compatibility, Complexity, Trialability, and Observability.

Relative Advantage is the extent to which an invention is seen as superior to the concept, program, or product it replaces. Compatibility refers to how well the innovation aligns with the potential adopters' values, experiences, and needs. Complexity refers to how difficult it is to comprehend and/or use the invention. Trialability is the degree to which an idea may be tried or experimented with before committing to implement it. Finally, Observability talks about the extent to which the invention produces measurable effects.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

With the promises and perils ChatGPT carries, it is vital to explore how one of the primary people affected adopts this innovation. This study will try to understand how Filipino freelance content writers adapt to the advent of ChatGPT, find out at what stage they have adopted it, and know the factors that influence their adoption. It aims to understand the role ChatGPT plays in their work performance. Specifically, the study aims to attain these specific objectives:

1. Analyze content writers' reactions and adaptations to the advent of ChatGPT.
2. Determine the current stage of ChatGPT adoption among content writers.
3. Identify the factors influencing content writers' adoption of ChatGPT.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to understand how and why the content writers adopt ChatGPT. In a series of



informal interviews, the researcher asked six content writers from a Filipino writers' Facebook community to share how they reacted to the advent of ChatGPT, explain in what stage they think they are now when it comes to the adoption of the AI, and identify the factors that influence their adoption of the innovation. Their answers to the first question will be categorized using the DOI's five adopter categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards.

Then, for the second question, the categorizations are either they are aware of the innovation, have decided to adopt or reject the innovation, on the initial use of the innovation to test it, and/or already in the continued use of the innovation. For the last part, their answers will be classified using the five main factors influencing innovation adoption – relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. Ultimately, these answers lead to the understanding of the role of ChatGPT to Filipino freelance content writers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results and discussion of the interviews done with the content writers, providing answers to the three specific problems of the study. For the sake of the discussion, the content writers are referred to by their initials to keep their anonymity.

1. Adopter Categories of the Filipino Content Writers to ChatGPT

Table 1
Adopter Categories of the Filipino Content Writers to ChatGPT

Content Writer	Adopter Category
MA	Early Majority
LY	Innovator
JM	Innovator
MV	Late Majority
DB	Innovator
MB	Innovator

When ChatGPT was launched, the innovators reacted concerned while simultaneously excited. According to JM, he was hesitant as this AI might either be unreliable or unethical. LY shared the same sentiments, saying she was *“happy and at the same time scared.”*

On the other hand, the early majority content writer, MA, said he was initially hesitant to try ChatGPT but already knew it would be a worthwhile innovation. He said that it can make his research much more straightforward.

The only late majority content writer, MV, feared ChatGPT's complexity and thought he would struggle to understand it. However, eventually, he gave it a try and was surprised at how user-friendly it was.

2. Stages by which Content Writers Adopt ChatGPT

All content writers answered that they are in continued use of the ChatGPT. They only have positive words to describe their current experience with this innovation. ChatGPT is a regular mainstay in their content writing process daily.

JM said that *ChatGPT makes things a lot faster.*

MV supported this by claiming, *“I saved time and energy by automating certain tasks like product research.”* He added that he can focus more on critical tasks and use the saved time to develop new strategies and ideas. The content writers also highlighted the quality of work that this AI can produce, which is effective for content writing and other niches.

MB said, *“There is a wide range of tools available, and the quality of work is on par with human work.”*

The results tell us that the content writers are already aware of the need for the innovation, have decided to adopt the innovation, and are already beyond the initial use (testing stage) of the innovation.



3. Factors that Influence Content Writers' Adoption of ChatGPT

Table 2
Factors that Influence Content Writers' Adoption of Chat GPT

Content Writer	Factors
MA	Relative Advantage
LY	Relative Advantage, Compatibility
JM	Relative Advantage, Compatibility, Observability
MV	Relative Advantage, Observability
DB	Relative Advantage, Observability, MB Compatibility, Observability

Regarding relative advantage, the content writers talked about how ChatGPT helped them make their work easier and instant. Unlike before, pre-ChatGPT, they are no longer prone to writer's block. They can converse with this AI to seek help. The efficiency of ChatGPT is top-notch. LY said that it helps her expound her thoughts.

"I will just have to review ChatGPT's recommendation rather than starting from 0. It helped me to understand more of the topic/niche, especially on topics/niche that I have little to no knowledge of," LY explained.

Aside from its efficiency, another relative advantage of ChatGPT is that it replaces a few writing tools, such as Grammarly and other rewriting tools. With ChatGPT, writers can use the same functions as other tools on the same platform.

As for compatibility, the writers emphasized how consistent ChatGPT is in providing what they need as content writers. MB said that using ChatGPT is already one of his client's requirements. It helps them accomplish some important parts of content writing, like research and proofreading.

"It is a valuable resource for generating ideas, conducting research, and improving writing quality," MV stated.

In relation, when it comes to observability, content writers are happy with the extent to which the AI provides actual and tangible results. ChatGPT provides them with relevant information and resources to use. Plus, its accessibility and ability to minimize turnaround times are also the things they like about the innovation.

4. Key Takeaways: Pros and Cons of ChatGPT to Content Writers

Overall, the advent of ChatGPT has provided content writers with advantages and disadvantages. Some of the key advantages the content writers identified are the ability of ChatGPT to generate text in a few minutes, its easiness of use, time-saving capability, versatility, and enhanced creativity. All of these help the content writers to be productive in their works. This is in line with scalability, customizability, and efficiency that Kalla and Smith (2023) talked about that ChatGPT can positively provide in general.

The disadvantages, on the other hand, are the effects it can cause to the writers on personal and professional levels.

MB said, *"I think with this tool, everyone can now create anything, and it can affect the expertise of other professionals like the writers."*

The writers became too reliant on it even though they knew it would not give them 100 percent accurate information and sometimes become too repetitive. Moreover, because of this, they become frustrated at times. Furthermore, because they become reliant on this AI, it cultivates laziness and prevents content writers from being creative and original. Another big concern that the writers raised is the potential of it to take over some jobs. These disadvantages jive with the cons Kalla and Smith (2023) have identified, especially the AI's need for more emotional intelligence and lack of empathy, as well as its limited ability to understand and respond to complex questions (Vasylykiv, 2023)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, ChatGPT has revolutionized how content writers perform their duties and responsibilities. They are indeed one of the primary groups of people affected by the introduction of this AI. Hence, content writers are mostly innovators who readily accept the innovation and are in continued use. However, there might be some doubts at first.

ChatGPT offers both advantages and disadvantages for content writers. Most notably, the writers enjoy this AI's easiness of use, time-saving capability, versatility, and enhanced creativity it brings. Moreover, content writers are also aware of the adverse effects that ChatGPT can have. Because AI can do many things, it can cultivate laziness and overreliance on the tool. Although limited in many aspects, it is hoped that this research will inspire more researchers to study the actual effects of ChatGPT on different industries. As ChatGPT continues to develop and improve, it is essential to monitor its influence on humanity.

RECOMMENDATION

The emergence of ChatGPT has marked a significant shift in the landscape of content creation, fundamentally altering the roles and methods of content writers. Positioned as central figures in this transformative era, content writers have demonstrated a willingness to embrace ChatGPT as a catalyst for innovation, albeit with some initial apprehension.

The benefits of ChatGPT for content writers are evident, offering a user-friendly interface, time-saving features, versatility, and the potential to enhance creativity. However, content writers remain mindful of the potential drawbacks, such as the risk of dependency and a decline in originality, stemming from overreliance on AI-generated content.

While this study sheds light on the impact of ChatGPT on content creation, further research is needed to explore its broader implications across various industries. Longitudinal studies will be invaluable in monitoring the sustained effects of

ChatGPT adoption on content quality, writer productivity, and audience engagement.

Furthermore, engaging stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, including content writers, AI developers, policymakers, and ethicists, is essential for fostering a nuanced understanding of ChatGPT's ethical and societal implications. Collaborative efforts will be crucial in developing guidelines and frameworks to ensure the responsible and ethical integration of ChatGPT into content creation processes.

As ChatGPT continues to evolve, it is imperative to maintain a critical perspective and proactive approach towards its implementation. By fostering a culture of adaptability and continuous learning among content writers, we can harness the potential of ChatGPT while preserving the unique creativity and authenticity of human-authored content.

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