



L.E.A.D. Brand System™ A Strategic Framework for Emotionally Intelligent, AI-Augmented Brand Building

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence technologies and their large-scale integration into marketing processes, contemporary brands face a key paradox: tools designed to deepen relationships with the consumer often lead to the atomization and depersonalization of the customer experience. This methodological guide introduces the L.E.A.D. Brand System™ — an integrated strategic platform aimed at overcoming this contradiction. The purpose of the study is to provide the theoretical justification and detailed explication of the system architecture that enables managing the brand as a holistic, adaptive, and emotionally intelligent organization. The methodological basis includes a systematic review of academic literature on service-dominant logic, systems thinking, and affective computing, as well as a meta-analysis of industry reports from leading consulting firms. As results, a four-component architecture of the L.E.A.D. System™ is proposed, including: Listen — multimodal collection and interpretation of emotionally charged data using AI; Engage — hyper-personalized communications based on principles of emotional intelligence; Adapt — dynamic adjustment of the consumer experience in real time; Deliver — maintenance of emotional and functional consistency of the brand across all touchpoints. In conclusion, it is demonstrated that the proposed system functions as a valid instrument of strategic management, transforming fragmented, tactical uses of AI into an integrated brand strategy focused on value co-creation. The work is addressed to brand strategists, chief marketing officers, and researchers in the fields of marketing and information systems who are focused on implementing advanced technologies into brand management practice.

Keywords: Branding, Artificial Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, L.E.A.D. Brand System™, Service-Dominant Logic, Systems Thinking, Consumer Experience, Brand Fragmentation, Affective Computing, Hyper-Personalization.

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary configuration of marketing is undergoing a tectonic restructuring, the primary catalyst for which is artificial intelligence (AI). Having evolved from a set of narrowly specialized tools and a subject of futurist debate, AI has assumed the status of a basic operational platform for all forms of consumer interaction. The scale of this transformation is confirmed by comparable economic and statistical indicators: by 2025, the global market for AI in marketing is estimated at \$47.32 billion, with a projected compound annual growth rate of 36.6% in 2024–2030 [1].

The diffusion of the technology has reached a maturity threshold: 88% of digital marketers already apply AI tools in everyday practice, and 69.1% of companies have institutionalized AI in their marketing processes [1]. Leading global corporations have in effect consolidated a strategic commitment to AI: 91.5% of them are making systematic investments in the corresponding technologies

[1]. Forecasts by analytical centers (including Gartner) point to a further deepening of integration: by 2025, 30% of outbound marketing messages of large organizations will be of synthetic origin, and by 2030 up to 30% of working time may be subject to automation [1, 2]. Taken together, these metrics unambiguously indicate that AI is not an optional add-on but a structural component of contemporary marketing infrastructure, determining competitiveness and operational efficiency of brands in the digital environment.

At the same time, despite unprecedented opportunities for automation, personalization, and optimization, the accelerated and often unsystematic implementation of AI exposes a fundamental scientific problem — the paradox of AI-mediated brand fragmentation. Technologies intended to deepen and individualize the connection with the audience in practice often generate a fragmented, contradictory, and depersonalized customer experience.

The consumer journey has ceased to follow a linear logic. It is

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transforming into a nonlinear trajectory across a multitude of heterogeneous touchpoints — chatbots, recommendation engines, generative search outputs, social media, and external review platforms [4]. In this multimodal ecosystem, the brand loses controllability of its own narrative: each AI system, while solving a narrow task, produces a locally optimal but collectively misaligned fragment of the overall impression.

The consequences of fragmentation are amenable to quantitative observation and are negative in character: it produces cognitive confusion in consumers, undermines trust, and accelerates churn [4]. Empirical data show that even with high satisfaction indicators (up to 95%) at individual stages of interaction, a complex multi-step trajectory may result in a negative cumulative experience for approximately every fourth customer [6]. This fact highlights the critical role of end-to-end consistency, which is systematically eroded by the tactical rather than strategic logic of AI implementation. A pronounced maturity gap is observed: despite the formally high level of AI utilization (88%), 43% of companies remain at the stage of experimentation, and the diffusion of practices to the level of frontline employees lags noticeably behind organizational investments [1]. Consequently, the isolated, instrumentally tactical application of powerful AI tools directly generates fragmentation of the consumer experience: the technology intended to integrate, paradoxically, amplifies disintegration.

This leads to an evident scientific gap: the body of literature is saturated with works on the application of individual AI tools, yet it offers virtually no holistic strategic models for managing the systemic complexity collectively produced by these tools.

Research objective: To construct and theoretically substantiate the strategic platform L.E.A.D. Brand System™, designed to provide emotional-intellectual assurance of brand consistency in an AI-augmented environment.

The author's hypothesis is based on the premise that a Brand strategy that systematically integrates artificial intelligence for listening, engagement, adaptation, and delivery of a coherent value proposition is capable of overcoming the paradox of AI-mediated fragmentation and forming durable, emotionally resonant relationships with consumers.

The novelty consists in the development of the conceptual L.E.A.D. framework, which for the first time synthesizes service-dominant logic, principles of affective computing, and artificial intelligence technologies to manage the emotional and functional coherence of the brand under conditions of a fragmented consumer experience.

CHAPTER 1. ARCHITECTURE AND PRINCIPLES OF THE L.E.A.D. BRAND SYSTEM™

This section explicates the architecture of the L.E.A.D. Brand System™ — a strategic platform aimed at overcoming

brand fragmentation in environments with AI-mediated interactions. The platform is organized as a four-component loop including Listen, Engage, Adapt, and Deliver, with the elements functioning as interconnected modules of a single cycle. Before proceeding to the analytical decomposition of each component, it is necessary to articulate the theoretical foundation that constitutes the integrity of the system.

Systems Thinking as a Paradigm for Managing Complexity

Traditional linear constructions of marketing — with their sequence of message creation → delivery → response — prove to be untenable in a digital reality whose multidimensionality, volatility, and stochasticity are radically intensified by the proliferation of autonomous AI agents, chatbots, and hyper-personalized channels [16]. Operating under such conditions requires a shift in epistemological optics. Systems thinking prescribes viewing the brand not as a fixed set of attributes, but as a complex adaptive system continuously co-evolving with its environment — the market, consumers, and technologies [9]. This perspective provides the necessary controlled flexibility when confronted with uncertainty and innovation discontinuities, which is functionally equivalent to navigation in the contemporary marketing space [7, 8].

In this vector, artificial intelligence exhibits a dual nature. On the one hand, it increases the entropy of the environment: it multiplies channels, explosively scales data volumes, and accelerates interaction loops [4]. On the other hand, it provides high-order instrumentation (advanced analytics, predictive modeling, automation) for orchestrating that same complexity. From this ambivalence follows a strategic imperative: deprived of a coherent systemic architecture, organizations inevitably reduce AI to a set of tactical techniques, thereby amplifying complexity instead of managing it. The L.E.A.D. System™ is proposed as such an architecture — a means to employ AI for systemic management rather than merely for local task execution.

The second supporting element of the theoretical core is service-dominant logic (S-D Logic) — a fundamental shift in the understanding of the nature of the brand and the mechanisms of value creation. It stands in opposition to goods-dominant logic (G-D Logic), which interprets value as a derivative attribute that is embedded by the producer into a thing [15, 19].

S-D Logic proceeds from the premise that the primary basis of exchange is not the thing, but service — the application of competencies (knowledge and skills) for the benefit of another party [10]. Value is neither produced “in the factory” nor transmitted to a recipient; it is invariably co-created with the participation of the consumer in the process of using a product or service (value-in-use) [11]. Within this paradigm, the brand ceases to be merely an identifier or a set of associations: it functions as a platform for joint value creation, and brand communications function as a process of dialogue and interaction [11].

Figure 1 below shows the structure of the L.E.A.D. methodology.



Fig.1. The Structure of the L.E.A.D.Methodology (copyright data).

In the context under consideration, AI technologies are no longer limited to tools for stimulating sales. They function as operant resources — that is, those capable of independently initiating action and generating value, as opposed to operand resources, which are subject to external influence. Personalization algorithms, knowledge bases, and predictive models are the brand's competencies mobilized for the benefit of the consumer: to help them solve a task, make an informed choice, or obtain a unique experience [20, 21].

This leads to the key thesis of the L.E.A.D. System™: the brand is a service infrastructure. If value is co-created in service

interactions, then the brand is not a wrapper for the product, but the infrastructure itself — a set of rules, interfaces, platforms, and technologies through which the joint creation of value unfolds. AI chatbots, recommendation engines, and AR/VR applications in this case act not as marketing channels, but as constitutive elements of the brand infrastructure. Accordingly, the aim of branding shifts from communicating a message to enabling a valuable service experience.

Table 1 shows a comparative analysis of product- and service-oriented logics in the context of branding.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of Goods-Dominant and Service-Dominant logics in the context of branding (compiled by the author based on [11, 20, 21]).

Criterion	Goods-Dominant Logic (G-D Logic)	Service-Dominant Logic (S-D Logic)
Unit of exchange	Tangible goods (operand resources)	Service (application of operand resources)
Role of the consumer	Recipient and destroyer of value	Co-creator of value
Place of value creation	Within the firm (in production)	In the process of interaction (value-in-use)
Role of the brand	Identifier, image, mark of product quality	Promise, platform for relationships, ecosystem
Strategic goal	Maximization of exchange value (value-in-exchange)	Facilitation of value co-creation

Thus, it can be stated that the classical linear model of marketing is no longer effective in the conditions of the digital environment, where interactions become nonlinear, parallel, and self-generating due to the presence of multiple autonomous AI agents, hyper-personalized channels, and accelerated feedback loops; instead, the brand should be considered through the prism of systems thinking as a complex adaptive system that co-evolves with the market, the consumer, and technologies, rather than as a stable set of attributes. In this system, AI plays an ambivalent role: it simultaneously increases the complexity of the environment (entropy) and provides higher-order instruments for managing this complexity (analytics, predictive models, automation), but without a holistic architecture this capacity disintegrates into tactical techniques and begins to amplify chaos rather than reduce it — this is precisely why the L.E.A.D. System™ is introduced as a managerial metastructure. The theoretical framework of such an architecture is the service-dominant logic (S-D Logic), which rejects the goods-

dominant logic (G-D Logic): value is no longer understood as a property embedded in the product and sold as is, but as service utility jointly created in the process of use (value-in-use), where the brand is not a label of the product, but a platform of relationships and co-creation of value. Within this logic, AI is considered not merely as a promotion tool, but as an operant resource — that is, an active competence of the brand (personalization, knowledge bases, predictive models), which acts on behalf of the consumer and for their benefit, helping them make decisions and obtain a unique experience; consequently, the key proposition of the L.E.A.D. System™ consists in the fact that the brand is essentially a service infrastructure (a set of rules, interfaces, technologies), and chatbots, recommender systems, and AR/VR solutions are not communication channels, but structural elements of this infrastructure, which shifts the objective of branding from message transmission to the provision of valuable service interaction.

Component L — Listening: AI-Augmented Data Collection and Affective Computing

The first module of L.E.A.D. — Listen — captures a qualitative shift: from one-time marketing surveys to continuous, deeply contextual, and multimodal monitoring of consumers' affective states.

Classical NLP-based sentiment analysis, where texts (reviews, posts) are distributed across tonalities — positive/negative/neutral — serves only as an entry point [11]. Listen advances significantly further, relying on the principles of Affective Computing — a field of computer science that relates to emotions, arises from them, or intentionally influences them [22].

Consequently, the system processes not only verbal signals, but also other modalities that carry emotional meaning:

Voice analysis: AI algorithms in real time infer the state of the speaker from acoustic and prosodic features — pitch and timbre, speech rate, intonational contours. In call centers this makes it possible to recognize frustration and to escalate the case in a timely manner or adapt the operator's script [23].

Facial expression recognition: computer vision tools interpret facial microexpressions, attributing basic emotions (joy, sadness, surprise, anger), which is applicable in ad pretesting and in usability evaluation of interfaces [14].

Physiological signal analysis: in more advanced protocols, biometric indicators (heart rate, galvanic skin response) are used as objective markers of the level of emotional arousal [24].

Thus, the focus shifts from capturing opinions to decoding emotions. Traditional metrics — Net Promoter Score (NPS) and customer satisfaction indices (CSAT) — capture rationalized, retrospective evaluations [25]. Listen is aimed at registering the immediate, often non-conscious affective response at the moment of interaction. Since positive emotional experiences — above all trust — act as key determinants of satisfaction and loyalty, direct listening to emotions provides access to the true levers of brand value formation [6].

Component E — Engagement: Hyperpersonalization of Communications in an Omnichannel Environment

The second component, Engage, capitalizes on the emotional

insights extracted at the Listen stage in order to construct and deliver a hyperpersonalized, relevant, and empathetic interaction experience.

Artificial intelligence enables personalization at fundamentally new scales. By analyzing behavioral trajectories, purchase history, contextual data, and emotional signals, AI systems are capable of adjusting content, product recommendations, offers, and even visual presentation for each specific consumer in real time [26]. Demand for such addressability is high: 71% of consumers expect it, and 76% experience frustration in its absence [29]. Generative AI technologies raise the bar even further, allowing not the selection of prefabricated modules, but the synthesis of unique texts and images on the fly for a specific user in a given context [17].

An illustrative example is the Netflix recommendation system: taking into account viewing history, ratings, time of day, and even device type, the algorithms generate a unique home page for each subscriber. This depth of personalization is a key driver of retention and, by some estimates, saves the company up to \$1 billion per year [12, 29].

From the standpoint of service-dominant logic [18], personalization is not merely a tactic for increasing conversion, but a fundamental mechanism through which the brand, as a service platform, performs co-creation of value. By providing relevant content or an individualized solution, the brand engages its competencies (data, algorithms) to help the consumer achieve their unique goals. In this way, the Engage component operationalizes S-D logic, transforming mass communication into a sequence of individualized acts of service provision.

The ability of AI to recognize and modulate human emotions opens up a wide range of applications, while simultaneously exacerbating critical ethical challenges. Therefore, the Engage component is obliged to operate under strict normative constraints, without crossing the fine line between genuine empathy and covert influence.

Table 2 below describes the key ethical risks of emotional AI and presents measures that allow these risks to be mitigated.

Table 2. Key ethical risks of emotional AI and mitigation measures (compiled by the author based on [13-15]).

Risk	Description	Mitigation measures in L.E.A.D. System™
Manipulation	Exploitation of vulnerabilities for commercial or political gain.	Clear internal policies prohibiting exploitative tactics. Transparency for the user.
Privacy	Unauthorized collection and use of personal emotional data.	Privacy by Design principle. Explicit opt-in consent. Anonymization and aggregation of data.
Bias	Amplification of social stereotypes and discrimination.	Regular auditing of models and data. Use of diverse and representative training datasets.
Transparency	AI as a black box, inability to explain the decision taken.	Use of interpretable models (XAI). Providing users with information on how AI affects their experience.

In AI-mediated interactions, consumer trust becomes a brand's key asset [26]. Consequently, the ethical application of AI is not a peripheral component of corporate social responsibility, but the core of the brand promise itself. The L.E.A.D. System™ proceeds from the premise that ethical guardrails are not a constraint, but a structural element of the system: transparency of AI usage practices; obtaining explicit consent for the collection of emotional data; regular auditing of algorithms for bias; provision of real mechanisms for user control over their own data. Ignoring these principles effectively deprives the brand of the status of a reliable service provider and leads to reputational consequences of catastrophic magnitude.

Component A — Adaptation: Dynamic Optimization of the Consumer Experience

The third component, Adapt, forms a closed feedback loop in which the brand is not reduced to reactive responses to consumer actions, but dynamically and proactively reconfigures the holistic consumer experience in real time.

If Engage is focused on the personalization of communications,

then Adapt extends this principle to the entire interaction context. Relying on a continuous data stream from the Listen component, the system is capable of:

Modifying the customer journey on the fly: algorithms reconfigure webpage content, the sequence of steps in the mobile application, and the set of available options, taking into account the user's current behavior and probabilistic intentions [26].

Proactively managing the experience: predictive analytics makes it possible to anticipate customer needs and churn risk, initiating preemptive interventions. Thus, when signs of frustration in product usage are detected, the system will automatically offer assistance via chatbot or send an instructional video [2, 3].

Optimizing omnichannel transitions: seamless channel continuity is ensured. For example, after beginning product selection on the website, the customer receives in the mobile application a notification regarding product availability in the nearest offline store, and upon arrival receives a personalized offer from a consultant (fig.2).

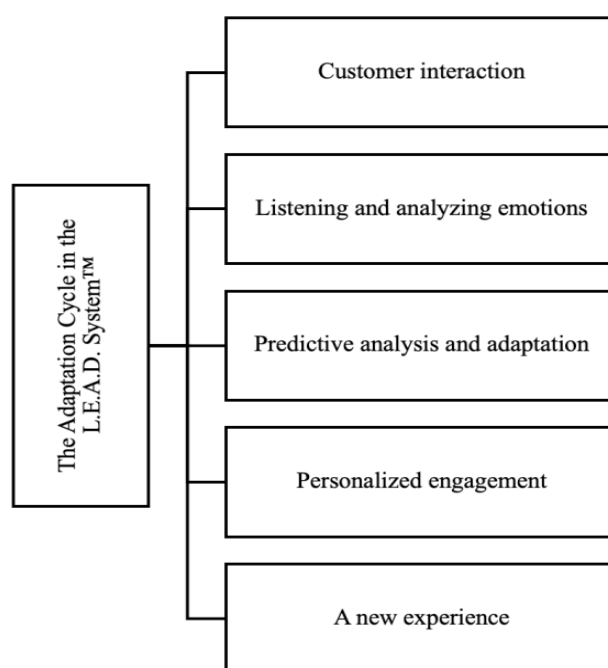


Fig.2. Adaptation Cycle in the L.E.A.D. System™ (compiled by the author based on [2, 3, 26]).

Thus, the transition takes place from Customer Journey Mapping to Customer Journey Orchestration. Mapping is a static description of a typical route, whereas orchestration, implemented by the Adapt component, is a continuous, intelligently governed process of guiding the route in real time. This is a practical implementation of systems thinking [9], in which the system (the brand) continuously reads changes in the environment (the customer's behavior and emotions) and adapts its own structures and actions to maintain stable equilibrium — a positive, value-based experience.

Component D — Implementation: Ensuring Emotional and Functional Consistency

The final, integrating module of the system — Deliver — ensures the seamless transfer of insights extracted at the Listen stage and of the experience designed at the Engage and Adapt stages, in such a way that the consumer receives them consistently across all touchpoints. Under omnichannel conditions, this module is simultaneously the most labor-intensive and the most critical: it makes it possible to overcome the paradox of fragmentation, transforming disparate interactions into a coherent brand trajectory.

The key complexity of omnichannel marketing is maintaining the integrity and consistency of the brand [5]. Breakdowns are driven by a combination of causes: organizational silos (when marketing, sales, and service operate in isolation), misalignment of platform technical requirements, and errors introduced by manual content updates [5]. Empirical studies show that users expect a coherent, predictable experience; when it breaks down, this triggers frustration, cognitive strain, and other negative reactions [30, 31].

Within the L.E.A.D. System™ framework, the task is solved at the architectural level. The platform functions as the brand's brain center and nervous system: it aggregates data from all touchpoints and enforces a unified logic and standards of execution. The technological foundation is twofold:

Centralized data and content hubs: PIM, CDP, and DAM act as a single source of truth, eliminating the divergence of artifacts and rules across channels [5].

Automated workflows: instead of manual edits across multiple venues, changes are propagated automatically, ensuring identity of prices, product descriptions, promo configurations, and communication tone across all environments.

The Deliver component redefines the very idea of consistency. In the traditional understanding, it was reduced to uniformity

— invariant logos, palettes, slogans. In the L.E.A.D. System™ paradigm, consistency is interpreted as coherent adaptivity: the alignment not of form, but of meaning.

This means that the external manifestations of the brand — message, offer, interface — must be contextually adapted to the channel and to the emotional state of the specific user (as prescribed by components L, E, A), while the invariant element remains the core value nucleus: the promise, principles, and proposition rooted in S-D logic. The experience is personalized, but remains unambiguously recognizable as the experience of interacting with this particular brand. This is the synthesis of the system: to deliver to each — differently, to all — holistically.

The effectiveness of Deliver is assessed through a composite system of metrics, including:

- Functional consistency: identity of prices, promotions, and product information across all channels [27, 28].
- Emotional consistency: stability of the brand's character and tone, measured through long-term tracking of sentiment, trust metrics, and emotional resonance [25]. This is precisely what acts as the key predictor of long-term loyalty: emotionally engaged customers are 52% more valuable to the brand (table 3).

Table 3. Technology and metric matrix for L.E.A.D. system components(compiled by the author based on [25, 27, 28]).

Component	Key technologies	Core process	Key metrics
L (Listen)	Sentiment analysis, affective computing, NLP, computer vision	Decoding the consumer's emotional state and intentions	Brand Sentiment Score, Emotional Response Index, Net Trust Score
E (Engage)	Generative AI, recommendation systems, chatbots, CRM	Co-creation of value through hyper-personalized interaction	Conversion Rate (by segments), Engagement Rate, Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)
A (Adapt)	Predictive analytics, Reinforcement Learning, CDP	Dynamic orchestration of the consumer journey in real time	Churn Prediction Accuracy, Next Best Action Success Rate, Journey Completion Rate
D (Deliver)	PIM, DAM, Headless CMS, marketing automation	Ensuring coherent adaptability across all touchpoints	Cross-Channel Consistency Score, Brand Trust Index, Customer Satisfaction (CSAT)

Thus, within component D (Deliver), the L.E.A.D. System™ performs its synthesizing function: it eliminates the fragmentation of experience in the omnichannel environment by technically anchoring a unified brand logic across all touchpoints, thereby transforming a set of disparate interactions into a coherent trajectory. Deliver achieves this not only through the unification of artifacts (prices, promotions, product descriptions) enabled by centralized data and content hubs (PIM, CDP, DAM) and the automated distribution of updates, but also through a higher level of alignment — coherent adaptivity: the brand in each channel may look and speak differently, emotionally attuning itself to the state of a specific user (Listen, Engage, Adapt), yet it remains recognizable at the level of meaning, promise, and value core. In this way, Deliver institutionalizes both functional consistency (technical, factual identity of terms

and information) and emotional consistency (stability of brand character), with the latter serving as a predictor of long-term loyalty and the economic value of the audience.

CONCLUSION

The results obtained make it possible to articulate a number of fundamental conclusions. First, contemporary branding practice operates under the pressure of a new technological imperative driven by the pervasive integration of artificial intelligence systems. However, targeted and tactically oriented implementation of AI generates a basic paradox: tools intended to enhance personalization in fact fragment and depersonalize the consumer experience. For sustainable development in this environment, brands must abandon linear schemas in favor of a systemic, holistic mode of organizing activity.

Second, the methodological foundation of such a shift is the synthesis of systems thinking, which provides an apparatus for managing complexity, and service-dominant logic, which conceptualizes the brand as a service infrastructure for co-creating value. Within this paradigm, AI is regarded not as a sales instrument, but as a key operant resource that enables large-scale execution of the brand's service promise.

Third, the L.E.A.D. Brand System™ developed in this work represents a practical operationalization of the above theoretical synthesis. Its four-link architecture — Listen, Engage, Adapt, Deliver — forms a closed self-learning loop that gives the brand the capability to continuously listen to the audience's emotional signals, empathetically engage it in a personalized dialogue, dynamically adapt the customer journey, and deliver a coherent, holistic experience across all touchpoints.

Therefore, the stated objective of the study — to develop and justify a strategic platform for brand management in the age of AI — has been achieved. The L.E.A.D. Brand System™ is a theoretically robust and practice-oriented model that addresses the problem of AI-mediated fragmentation. The system provides a framework for transitioning from chaotic use of isolated AI tools to strategic brand management as a complex adaptive system.

The practical significance lies in providing chief marketing officers and brand strategists with a clear roadmap for transforming their approaches. The L.E.A.D. System™ is not a set of technologies, but a new philosophy of brand management centered on empathy, adaptability, and consistency, implemented through AI. Its adoption increases operational efficiency while simultaneously deepening, strengthening, and extending relationships with consumers, which today is a key source of competitive advantage.

This work opens several promising directions for further research:

- Empirical validation: it is necessary to conduct longitudinal case studies in organizations implementing elements comparable to the L.E.A.D. System™, with the aim of quantitatively assessing the impact on key business metrics (CLV, NPS, retention).

- Development of standardized metrics: it is necessary to develop and unify indicators for measuring the emotional consistency of the brand, applicable across industries.

- In-depth study of ethical aspects: as affective computing evolves, ethical frameworks and AI governance mechanisms should be established to ensure responsible application of emotional AI in marketing and the protection of consumer interests.

In conclusion, the L.E.A.D. Brand System™ outlines a trajectory of the future in which AI technologies become not a barrier, but a bridge between the brand and the human being, enabling the creation of truly intelligent and emotionally resonant brands.

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