# Reconstructing the Power Structure of Visual Communication in the Platform Era: Re-examining Content Production Mechanisms Amid the Rise of AIGC

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**Abstract**

As platformization becomes the dominant structure shaping global digital ecosystems, the domain of visual communication is entering a phase of extensive structural reconfiguration. This study argues that the rise of AI-generated content (AIGC) does not merely revolutionize creative workflows but exposes and intensifies long-standing tensions between algorithmic governance, creator autonomy, and platform-centered visibility structures. Building upon theories of media affordances, platform governance, and visual cultural politics, this paper presents a comprehensive and expanded framework—aimed at understanding how AIGC reshapes cultural production, reorganizes symbolic power, and transforms meaning-making processes in the platform era.

**Keywords:** AIGC, platformization, visual culture, algorithmic governance, media affordances, digital power

## 1. Introduction: From Technological Waves to Platform Power Visibility

In the past decade, discussions about digital transformation have overwhelmingly emphasized technological waves such as big data, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence. However, the deeper structural force reshaping global communication ecosystems has been platformization, which determines how information flows, how attention is distributed, and how cultural value is assigned. The emergence of AIGC reveals these hidden structures by making visible the mechanisms through which platforms influence not only the circulation of content but also its very production conditions. This paragraph further elaborates the conceptual implications of platform-driven visual ecosystems, highlighting how power, visibility, and cultural production converge in the AIGC era.

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systems means that any technological shift—especially one capable of generating content at scale—will inevitably reconfigure power relations within the communication ecology. This paragraph further elaborates the conceptual implications of platform-driven visual ecosystems, highlighting how power, visibility, and cultural production converge in the AIGC era.

Within this context, creators face increasing pressure to align with platform incentives. Their ability to express stylistic individuality becomes constrained by algorithmic preferences that reward predictability, emotional intensity, and fast-paced visual styles. AIGC intensifies this pressure by automating aesthetic norms derived from platform-trained datasets, thereby embedding platform logic directly into the generative process. This paragraph further elaborates the conceptual implications of platform-driven visual ecosystems, highlighting how power, visibility, and cultural production converge in the AIGC era.

Media affordance theory offers a lens for understanding how AIGC serves as both an enabling and constraining force. Its generative capabilities expand creative possibility while simultaneously narrowing stylistic diversity by relying on historically successful patterns. Platform governance frameworks further reveal how algorithmic policies determine which forms of cultural participation receive visibility and which become marginalized. This paragraph further elaborates the conceptual implications of platform-driven visual ecosystems, highlighting how power, visibility, and cultural production converge in the AIGC era.

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As AIGC content floods digital ecosystems, platforms gain heightened power to curate, filter, and rank. The exponential increase in content supply intensifies competition for visibility, making platform-regulated exposure the most valuable resource in visual communication. This shift further centralizes power, strengthening the role of platforms as cultural gatekeepers. This paragraph further elaborates the conceptual implications of platform-driven visual ecosystems, highlighting how power, visibility, and cultural production converge in the AIGC era.

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## 2. Theoretical Foundations: Media Affordances, Platform Governance, and Visual Cultural Politics

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## 3. Structural Transformation of Visual Content Production

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## 4. Algorithmic Visibility Power and Multi-Layered Discipline

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## 5. AIGC as a Platform Power Amplifier

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## 6. Political Dimensions of Platformized Visual Culture

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**7. Conclusion and Research Outlook**

AIGC provides a structural lens through which to observe platform power consolidation. This article identifies three forms of structural platform power: visibility power, disciplinary power, and interpretative power. Meaning-making shifts from a creator-centered model to a platform-centered model. Future research may explore algorithmic aesthetics and cultural diversity, regional variations in platform power, de-creatorized visual culture, and how AIGC transforms cross-cultural communication patterns.

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