

The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Designing a Strategic Pattern for the Platform Economy (Case Study: Platform Commerce in Iran and Russia)

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Extended Abstract

Purpose

This study aims to develop and validate a strategic, AI-enabled pattern for platform commerce that both elevates firm-level performance and strengthens regional competitiveness while practically easing Iran–Russia trade. The proposed pattern is intended to provide a context-grounded rather than generic blueprint, reflecting the institutional realities, regulatory constraints, and market textures of both countries. Specifically, the study focuses on operationalizable levers—advanced user analytics, trustworthy branding, dynamic pricing logic, modernized legal frameworks, robust data governance, and interoperable payments infrastructure—so platforms can convert AI capabilities into measurable growth, resilience, and cross-border interoperability.

Design/methodology/approach

This research uses a mixed design that pairs evidence-based qualitative discovery with rigorous quantitative validation. The qualitative phase involved 12 domain experts in the digital economy and AI from Iran and Russia. Through open, axial, and selective coding, the analysis identifies the core categories of platform strategy and develops a paradigm model that links micro-level mechanisms (analytics, branding, pricing) to macro-level enablers (law, payments, data security). Credibility is reinforced by thick description, process memos, and triangulation across interviews and documents. In the quantitative phase, a survey was administered to 221 managers and specialists across platform firms and related institutions. Using PLS-SEM, the study estimates causal paths among the identified constructs, evaluates measurement properties via Cronbach's alpha and AVE, and tests the structural model's fit and explanatory power. Sensitivity checks and multicollinearity diagnostics provide additional assurance.

Findings

The qualitative synthesis isolates six high-impact levers for AI-enabled platform performance: (1) deep audience-behavior analytics that support segmentation, prediction,

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and personalization; (2) strategic branding linked to trust and safety signals; (3) iterative reform and modernization of commercial regulations; (4) dynamic pricing policy integrating elasticity, competition, and fairness constraints; (5) copyright protection and data governance; and (6) account systems integrated with modern, trustworthy payment rails. Quantitatively, all hypothesized paths are significant at the 95% confidence level. The structural model indicates that user analytics and payments infrastructure exert the strongest total effects on platform outcomes, with branding and legal modernization mediating these effects through trust formation and risk reduction. Robust data governance functions as a cross-cutting moderator, strengthening the influence of analytics and pricing on adoption and retention when privacy, consent, and auditability standards are explicit.

Complementary analysis suggests a staged implementation logic: quick wins arise from analytics, recommendations, and lightweight branding refreshes; system-level gains require coordinated advances in payments, identity, and legal clarity. Cross-border trade facilitation emerges most decisively when payments interoperability and data-sharing protocols are aligned with privacy and copyright guarantees, reducing frictions in settlement, returns, and dispute resolution. In the Iran–Russia corridor, constraints around sanctions exposure, localization mandates, and language/script heterogeneity make transparent governance and auditable AI pipelines especially salient for building partner confidence and meeting compliance requirements.

Research limitations/implications

This dual-country focus enhances contextual validity yet narrows generalizability to settings with comparable institutional logics. The cross-sectional design restricts claims about dynamic adaptation and feedback effects in algorithmic systems. Future research should prioritize: (a) longitudinal tracking of AI interventions and regulatory changes; (b) field experiments that test pricing and recommendation policies under real demand shocks; (c) extensions to additional Eurasian and Global South markets to evaluate transferability; and (d) comparative studies of payments interoperability and identity frameworks, including cryptographic proofs and tokenized settlements, to probe efficiency–compliance trade-offs. Methodologically, subsequent work can enrich the measurement model with behavioral telemetry, incorporate multilevel SEM to nest user, firm, and ecosystem effects, and use causal discovery tools to triangulate with theory-driven paths.

Practical implications

For platform operators, the results translate into a prioritized roadmap:

Analytics and personalization: Stand up pipelines for event-level data, define privacy-preserving cohorts, and deploy predictive models (propensity, churn, LTV) that feed recommendation and pricing engines. Instrument for A/B and bandit testing to balance exploitation with exploration.

Brand and trust architecture: Link brand promises to verifiable signals—service-level objectives, authenticity labels, dispute resolution metrics—and surface them in UX to lower perceived risk. Align CX copy and visual identity across Persian, Russian, and English touchpoints.

Pricing and revenue design: Implement dynamic, value-based pricing with guardrails for fairness and regulatory compliance. Use elasticity estimation, competitor signals, and inventory constraints; expose transparent policies for fees, promotions, and refunds.

Legal modernization and governance: Codify data minimization, consent management, and audit trails. Clarify copyright, platform liability, and content moderation standards; establish redress mechanisms and ombuds functions to handle cross-border complaints. Payments and accounts: Integrate multi-rail payment options with strong KYC/AML, tokenized credentials, and real-time fraud detection. Support escrow, split payments, and programmable payouts to accommodate marketplaces and exporters; pursue bilateral agreements for settlement and FX risk management.

Public agencies should synchronize regulatory updates with capacity building: standardized APIs for tax reporting, privacy-by-design templates, and sandboxes for testing cross-border algorithms and payment flows. Industry consortia can co-develop reference implementations for interoperable wallets, identity, and dispute resolution.

Social implications

An AI-informed platform economy can widen SME participation, reduce cross-border frictions, and improve consumer protection through auditable models and privacy safeguards. At the same time, risks of surveillance, algorithmic bias, labor precarity, and digital exclusion require proactive governance. Practical safeguards include impact assessments for high-stakes algorithms, independent audits, complaint channels accessible in both Persian and Russian, and inclusive digital literacy programs. Balanced governance fosters trust, equitable access, and resilience, particularly where geopolitical and currency risks raise the cost of coordination.

Originality/value

This study integrates grounded theory with PLS-SEM to propose and empirically support a context-specific strategic pattern for AI-enabled platform commerce spanning Iran and Russia. By explicitly connecting micro-level levers—behavioral analytics, branding, pricing—to macro-level enablers—legal reform, payments interoperability, and data governance—it offers a transferable yet locally tuned blueprint for platform leaders and policymakers. The contribution lies in showing how AI capabilities create value only when coupled with trust infrastructure and regulatory clarity, and in mapping a phased path from quick wins to systemic transformation. The model, while rooted in two countries' realities, outlines design choices and governance guardrails that can inform other emerging digital economies seeking competitive, compliant, and resilient growth.

Keywords: Digital Economy; Platform Economy; Artificial Intelligence; PLS-SEM; Behavioral Analytics; Trade between Iran and Russia