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The Visibility of AI Content Labels: A Comparative Study of Label Presentation Across Four Short-Video Platforms

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Abstract. The continuous entry of AI-generated content (AIGC) into short-video platforms has made AI labels an important cue for users to identify content sources, yet having a label does not mean the label is prominent enough. This paper selects 50 videos carrying AI labels from each of Douyin, Kuaishou, Bilibili, and Xiaohongshu, and compares them across three aspects: label position, visual salience, and information depth. The study finds that the AI labels of all four platforms are visible on the first screen, but most are located in auxiliary information areas with limited visual prominence; the platforms also differ in label wording and follow-up explanatory information. This shows that AI content labeling must address not only the question of "whether there is a label" but also "how to make it seen" and "what can be known after seeing it".

Keywords: AI content labeling, short-video platforms, information visibility, interface presentation, platform governance

1. Introduction

On 1 September 2025, the Measures for the Labeling of AI-Generated Synthetic Content, jointly issued by the Cyberspace Administration of China and three other departments (hereinafter the Labeling Measures), officially took effect, and the accompanying mandatory national standard Cybersecurity Technology--Method for Labeling AI-Generated Synthetic Content (GB 45438-2025) was implemented simultaneously. Before and after the Labeling Measures took effect, mainstream short-video platforms such as Douyin, Kuaishou, Bilibili, and Xiaohongshu all issued relevant announcements and successively launched AI content labeling functions.

Yet having a label does not mean the label can be effectively seen. Whether a platform fulfills its labeling obligation at the institutional level and whether the label has sufficient visual salience within the interface are two different questions. Both are prompts for AI-generated content, but some labels sit at the bottom of the video while others appear in the content description; some are merely textual prompts while others can be clicked for further explanation. These seemingly minor interface differences actually bear on whether AI labels can truly serve their prompting function. Based on this, this paper addresses three questions: how are AI content labels presented within short-video interfaces? what differences exist in the presentation across platforms? and what visibility characteristics do these differences reflect?

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This paper adopts content analysis, taking Douyin, Kuaishou, Bilibili, and Xiaohongshu as research objects. Samples were collected on 19 August 2026 using keywords such as "AI content" and "AI-generated"; 50 videos carrying AI content labels were selected from each platform, for a total of 200 videos. The comparison proceeds across three aspects--position layout, visual salience, and information depth--and is developed through concrete case analysis.

2. Literature review

2.1. Review of research on AI-generated content governance

Existing studies have systematically reviewed the evolution of China's AI content labeling system: the Provisions on the Administration of Deep Synthesis of Internet Information Services, issued in 2022, first introduced labeling requirements for deep-synthesis content [1]; in March 2025, the Cyberspace Administration of China and three other departments jointly issued the Measures for the Labeling of AI-Generated Synthetic Content [2] (hereinafter the Labeling Measures), and the accompanying mandatory national standard Cybersecurity Technology--Method for Labeling AI-Generated Synthetic Content (GB 45438-2025) was issued simultaneously [3]; both took effect on 1 September 2025, and this systematic design marks the establishment of a normative framework for AI labeling at the national level in China. From a global perspective, the mandatory labeling requirements of the EU Artificial Intelligence Act [4], the legislation of California, USA, on transparency and source-information disclosure for AI-generated content [5], and the operator labeling obligations under South Korea's Basic Act on Artificial Intelligence [6] all indicate that regulating AI-generated content has become an international consensus.

Labels for AI-generated synthetic content mainly take two forms: explicit labels and implicit labels. An explicit label is one added to the generated-synthetic content or to an interactive interface and presented in text, sound, or graphics in a way that users can clearly perceive; an implicit label is one added to the file data of generated-synthetic content through technical measures and is not easily perceived by users [7].

Documents such as the Measures for the Labeling of AI-Generated Synthetic Content and the Cybersecurity Technology--Method for Labeling AI-Generated Content clarify the obligations of all parties and provide legal constraints and procedural norms for the implementation of AI labeling. Scholars have argued that the labeling of AI-generated synthetic content is of great significance: first, it safeguards information authenticity and the public's right to know; second, it promotes the healthy development of the artificial intelligence industry; and third, it helps build a clean and clear cyberspace and advance the use of technology for the benefit of society [8].

2.2. Review of research on short-video platform interfaces and information visibility

Existing studies have also explored in depth, from a communication perspective, how short-video interface design affects users' attention allocation and information acquisition. The information display area is concentrated in the lower-left corner of the video frame or at the far left of the bottom, containing the creator's avatar and name as well as the video's description text and topic tags. Clicking the avatar jumps directly to the personal homepage, and a "Follow" button is usually placed next to the name. This layout lets users follow similar content they are interested in and strengthens their connection with the platform [9]; the video's description text and topic tags (#Topic) are uniformly placed below the creator's name, and most platforms show only the first one or two lines by default, requiring a click on "Expand" to read the full text. This design lets text serve

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only an auxiliary cognitive function (such as guiding the direction of comments or supplementing background information), since excessive text display would obscure the main content and damage the immersive viewing experience [9]. It follows that the various types of information in a short-video interface are not at the same level: the content itself sits at the highest level, while other interactive and expanded elements serve as auxiliary components, and different functional areas differ in visual hierarchy; position is therefore an important factor affecting the visibility of AI labels.

Information visibility within an interface is related to factors such as position, size, color, and hierarchy: information that is more prominent in position, more striking in size and color, and higher in hierarchy is more likely to attract attention than other information. Therefore, for AI labels, institutional compliance and substantive effectiveness are two different issues. Scholars have already pointed out that current AI-generated short-video labels suffer from problems such as a lack of salience, ambiguous semantics, missing risk-grading for communication, cumbersome labeling procedures, and inconsistent labeling across ports [9]; the platforms also differ significantly in label position, label form, and technical recognition capability. The major short-video platforms have basically clarified and actively implemented rules on displaying AI labels, yet the above-mentioned technical shortcomings and regulatory loopholes remain real problems that call for urgent resolution.

In summary, existing research mainly discusses AI content labeling from the perspectives of institutional norms, governance value, and risk prevention, and some scholars have begun to attend to problems such as inconspicuous labels and inconsistent platform presentation. At the same time, platform-interface studies show that the position, size, color, and hierarchy of information affect its visual salience. Yet few existing studies examine AI labels as a concrete piece of interface information, and comparisons of label position, visual form, and information hierarchy across different short-video platforms remain inadequate.

3. Analysis and results

3.1. Research design

This study collected samples on 19 August 2026. The sample consisted of 50 AI videos from each of Douyin, Kuaishou, Bilibili, and Xiaohongshu, obtained by searching with keywords such as "AI content" and "AI-generated"; search results were presented in each platform's default order, and the researcher browsed them in sequence and screened according to the above criteria until 50 qualifying samples were obtained per platform. The selection criteria were threefold: first, the video content had relatively obvious AI-assisted generation characteristics; second, in principle, videos published by the same account were not selected repeatedly; and third, the video page had an AI content label available for observation and comparison. Since this paper focuses on the on-screen visibility of existing AI labels, the AI-labeling rate was not calculated. Coding items included platform, whether directly visible on the first screen, label position (bottom information area, description area), visual presentation features (font size, transparency, color contrast), and whether the label could be clicked to view an explanation.

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3.2. Comparison of AI label presentation across platforms

Table 1. Comparison of AI label presentation across platforms

Platform	Directly visible on first screen	Label position	Visual presentation features	Clickable for explanation
Douyin	Yes	Bottom information area	Small font, semi-transparent color, low contrast	Yes; different label types have different explanatory content
Kuaishou	Yes	Bottom information area	Small font, semi-transparent color, low contrast	No
Bilibili	Yes	In landscape mode, the AI label is in the content description area; in portrait mode, it is in the bottom information area.	Small font, semi-transparent color, but more discernible than on other platforms	No
Xiaohongshu	Yes	Bottom information area	Small font, semi-transparent color, low contrast	Author-added labels are not clickable; platform-added labels are clickable

3.3. Case analysis of typical examples on each platform

3.3.1. Convergence in label position: AI labels generally enter auxiliary information areas

As mentioned above, the information display area is concentrated in the lower-left corner of the video frame or at the far left of the bottom, containing the creator's avatar and name as well as the video's description text and topic tags, and the primary and secondary status of this content is also distinguished within the area by font, color, and size. The human visual attention mechanism determines that the central area of the screen is where users' attention is most concentrated, while information in the marginal area is easily overlooked [10]. Except for Bilibili, the three platforms that mainly feature portrait short videos all place the AI label at the bottom of the information display area; Bilibili short videos allow flexible switching between landscape and portrait modes, with the AI label located in the content description area in landscape mode and in the bottom auxiliary information area in portrait mode. Thus, although the label itself can be presented directly in the interface that users browse, its priority is lower than that of the video's core elements. Some studies note that on certain platforms the prompt is "marginalized in position and easily obscured by interface elements, making it difficult for users to recognize clearly under normal viewing conditions" [11].

The size and color of a label determine how quickly it is captured. Visual salience theory holds that the degree to which an object stands out in the visual field relative to its surroundings directly determines whether it can attract users' attention. UI design principles also stress that the visual hierarchy of information must be established through a correct combination of font size, font weight, and color, and that greater contrast yields higher information legibility [12]. The AI labels of all four platforms are small, semi-transparent, low-contrast text; against the rich colors and complex animations of the short-video interface itself, such labels have relatively low salience.

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3.3.2. Semantic stratification of labels: "author statement" or "platform identification"

The platforms classify the source of AI labels, broadly dividing them into those actively added by the author and those added after platform identification (see Figure 1 and Table 2). The labels added by platform identification differ slightly even within a single platform, and the same type of label also varies across platforms. These different formulations reflect the platforms' distinctions in the degree of certainty about AI content and give rise to different semantic levels.

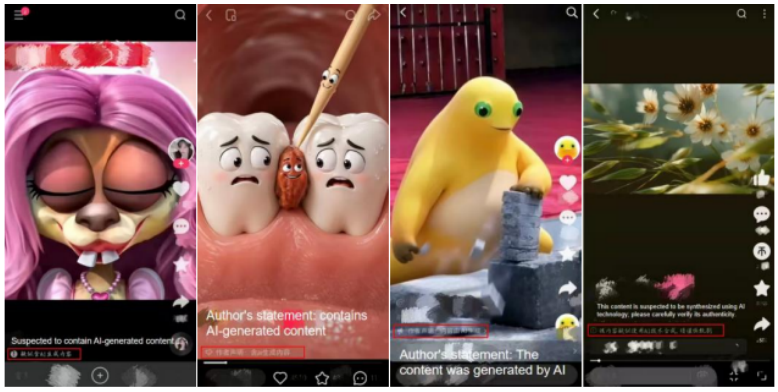


Figure 1. Examples of AI labels on Douyin, Kuaishou, Xiaohongshu, and Bilibili

Table 2. AI content classification and texts

Platform	Douyin	Kuaishou	Xiaohongshu	Bilibili
AI label added voluntarily	"Author statement: Content generated by AI"	"Author statement: Contains AI-generated content"	"Author statement: Contains AI-generated content"	"Author statement: This video uses AI synthesis technology"
AI label added passively	"Contains AI-generated content" "Suspected use of AI generation technology; please discern carefully"	"Suspected to contain AI-generated content" "This content is AI-generated"	"Possibly contains AI-generated content"	"Contains AI-generated content" "This content is suspected to be AI-synthesized; please discern with caution"

Douyin's labels fall into three cases: when the creator actively declares, the work page displays the statement "Content generated by AI"; when the platform detects suspected AI content, it adds "Suspected use of AI generation technology; please discern carefully"; and according to the platform's relevant rules, when the platform verifies an implicit label in the metadata, it adds "The work contains AI-generated content". Douyin's labels appear on the work pa'ge and are visible to users without extra action.

Kuaishou announced that it has launched AI-generated synthetic content labeling and a user self-declaration function: first, it adds an explicit "AI-generated" label and an implicit label embedded in the file metadata to content generated by AI on the platform; second, when publishing or disseminating content clearly generated by AI or detected by the platform as suspected AI, it provides a prominent prompt around the content [13]. Kuaishou's label types also fall into three categories: when the creator actively declares, the work page displays the statement "Content generated by AI"; when the platform detects suspected AI content, it adds "Suspected to contain AI-generated content" and "This content is AI-generated".

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Xiaohongshu's Announcement on Autonomous Labeling of AI-Generated Synthetic Content states: "Pursuant to the requirements of the Measures for the Labeling of AI-Generated Synthetic Content, the platform will continuously strengthen its recognition and detection capability for AI-generated synthetic content; if a creator fails to label AI-generated synthetic content at the publishing stage, the platform will add a label to the undeclared content based on the detection result. Such passively unlabeled AI-generated synthetic content will be subject to restricted distribution by the platform" [14]. While encouraging creators to add AI labels voluntarily, this announcement also explicitly states that it limits the traffic of passively labeled content. Among the 50 samples, only 14 videos were labeled "Possibly contains AI-generated content", while the remaining 36 were all marked "Author statement: Contains AI-generated content".

Bilibili's AI labels are relatively conspicuous. Landscape videos clearly show, in the description section, the author-added AI label or the platform-added labels "Contains AI-generated content" or "This content is suspected to be AI-synthesized; please discern with caution", and portrait videos also mark the AI label in the information display area; some videos support both landscape and portrait playback, and both modes clearly present the AI label.

3.3.3. Differences in information depth: from "seeing the label" to "understanding the label"

The four platforms differ in how they position the function of AI labels. On some platforms the AI label serves merely as a content reminder, while on others it can be clicked to view an explanation that further provides information such as the label's source. Douyin's AI label column can be clicked a second time: if it is creator-declared information, clicking shows "Why am I seeing this prompt" and explains the reason; for the other two cases, clicking shows "Why am I seeing this warning" and explains the reason. Below that page, users can also click through to read Douyin's Q&A Announcement on AI-Generated Content Management to learn the platform's rules, and the bottom also marks warning feedback and infringement reporting. Kuaishou's labels are display-only, with no directly clickable platform rules. Xiaohongshu's AI labels can also be clicked to jump to the platform announcement, but do not include feedback markers such as reporting. Bilibili's labels are likewise display-only, with no directly clickable platform rules.

Overall, the AI labels of all four platforms can be presented directly on the first screen and are classified according to different situations, but their visual prominence is generally limited, and they also differ in semantics and in the completeness of follow-up supplementary explanatory information.

4. Discussion

4.1. AI governance has entered the interface level

In the digital media environment, users perceive and learn about policies entirely through the interface, and the interface's presentation affects, to some extent, the information content users receive and their judgments. Therefore, alongside implementing institutions, AI content governance should also attend to the interface-governance issue of "how labels are presented and perceived within the interface".

The commonality lies in position layout and visual salience. The AI labels of all four platforms are small, semi-transparent, low-contrast text and are generally located in auxiliary information areas; against the rich colors and complex animations of the short-video interface itself, such labels have relatively low salience.

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The difference lies in the wording of the labels. Among creator-added AI labels, "Contains AI-generated content" emphasizes that the video contains AI-generated components; "Content generated by AI" focuses on the source of the video content; and "Uses AI synthesis technology" focuses on the creative means. These formulations provide AI content information from different angles and form different semantic emphases. Among labels added after platform identification, some express certainty ("Contains AI-generated content") while others take a more cautious attitude ("Suspected use of AI generation technology", "Suspected to contain AI-generated content", "Possibly contains AI-generated content"). This difference forms emphases in different respects--both technical and content-related--and reflects the uncertainty of the platforms' judgments.

This suggests that the interface governance of AI content needs both to re-examine label position layout, visual salience, and information hierarchy at the level of interface layout design, and to attach importance to the wording of label content. When the information of governance policies must be conveyed through the interface, interface design also affects the actual delivery of governance information.

4.2. Behind "weak visibility" lies a balance between users' right to know and viewing experience

The interface design of short-video platforms takes content consumption and rapid information acquisition as important goals [15]. Within the limited mobile interface, the video subject, creator information, interaction buttons, and various prompts together occupy visual space. Our sample shows that AI labels are usually located in auxiliary information areas with relatively low visual priority. This presentation reduces, to some extent, the labels' interference with content viewing, but it may also weaken their role as information prompts.

Thus, the interface design of AI labels actually faces a trade-off between viewing experience and users' right to know. As AI-generated content and real content become increasingly hard to distinguish at the visual level, labels bear the important function of prompting content sources. What platforms need to consider is not simply raising the visual intensity of labels, but keeping necessary source information sufficiently visible without excessively interfering with content viewing.

4.3. From "visible" to "understandable": AI labels need information hierarchy design

"Visible" addresses whether the label can be presented directly, while "understandable" further involves how much information the label can provide. When users see the prompt "Contains AI-generated content", they may also need to know the source, reason, and basis of judgment of the label. From this perspective, an AI label should not be merely a static tag, but can also become an interactive information gateway that provides users with further explanation and feedback channels.

To sum up, from institutional compliance to substantive effectiveness, and from "visible" to "understandable", the deepening of AI label governance requires, beyond institutional improvement, greater attention to how labels are presented within the interface. Only in this way can the original design intent of the labeling system—"safeguarding information authenticity and the public's right to know" --be truly realized in communication practice.

5. Conclusion

As science and technology advance with each passing day, the quality of AI-created works is increasingly approaching the human level. When fabrication comes ever closer to reality, to the

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point where the true and the false are hard to tell apart, what we need is not only more efficient technical means and stronger institutional safeguards, but also to let existing rules truly reach the places where platforms and users can see them. An AI content label may look like nothing more than a small line of text in the interface, yet behind it lies people's most basic knowledge of content sources. The development of AI should serve social progress, not weaken people's right to know, judgment, and subjectivity. Of course, this study still has certain limitations. Because no experimental method has yet been introduced, this paper mainly examines how AI labels are presented in platform interfaces and cannot yet further explain whether users truly notice these labels or what actual impact different labels produce. Future research could further collect users' fixation duration and attention probability toward AI labels across different platform interfaces, and use user surveys to examine how different label formulations affect users' trust judgments and content evaluations.

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