

Chapter 8

AI–Powered Destination Marketing: Personalization, Consumer Engagement, and Competitive Positioning

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ABSTRACT

The central aim of this research study is to highlight the opportunities and challenges surrounding the use of AI technology in the marketing and promotion of tourism destinations. Its promotion comprises a deliberate and well-conceived strategy for optimizing the benefits derived from tourism expenditure, aiming to generate economic returns while also fostering other social, cultural, or environmental values for the destination. This study focuses on AI-powered destination marketing with a special emphasis on personalization to enhance consumer engagement. Investigating the consumer viewpoint is a crucial aspect of this work, as it is essential to ensure that the design and implementation of AI-powered marketing strategies remain

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consumer-centric (Geisler,2018). With the advancement of technology, consumers can be individually addressed through marketing actions and tools based on in-depth knowledge about their preferences and behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Technological platforms that facilitate the various processes involved in destination marketing have been increasingly developed in recent years, offering enhanced opportunities to tailor recommendations for visitors. Artificial intelligence (AI) studies in the tourism field continue to experience rapid growth, reflecting the ongoing evolution and increasing importance of AI in this sector. AI will revolutionize hospitality and tourism marketing by reengineering internal processes, improving stakeholder relationships, and transforming customer services (Bulchand-Gidumal et al., 2024).

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) worldwide collaborate extensively with various stakeholders to steer destination marketing activities, often including the facilitation of supply and demand information (Pike & Page, 2014). AI is widely viewed as a critical innovation that enhances the quality of data analytics, customer experience management, and operational efficiency (Aguirre Montero & López-Sánchez, 2021). AI-powered marketing has significantly improved efficiency, personalization, and strategic decision-making in various functions(V. Kumar et al., 2024).

AI-powered virtual influencers outperform human influencers in marketing due to their story-driven approach, improved digital marketing campaigns, and are perceived as more authentic (Allal-Chérif et al., 2024).

Artificial intelligence is expected to significantly impact marketing strategies and customer behaviors, with its effectiveness enhanced when it augments human managers rather than replacing them (Davenport et al., 2020). Smart tourism destinations, incorporating ICTs and value co-creation, can enhance their competitiveness by providing better information and access to global markets (Cimbaljević et al., 2019).

Social media images of tourism destinations that incorporate entertainment, informativeness, credibility, personalization, and incentives have a positive impact on consumer engagement and eWOM behavior (Abbasi et al., 2023).

AI personalization in marketing strategies can enhance customer engagement and drive business growth by tailoring messages to consumer behavior and demographics (Sodiq Odetunde Babatunde et al., 2024). Personalized intelligent tourist recommendation services enable tourists to create individual travel plans and efficiently search for tourism information. AI-driven strategies in entrepreneurship can enhance market analysis, product development, customer engagement, and operations

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