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**Title: Artificial Intelligence in Hospitality Sales:
Transforming Customer Engagement and
Revenue Generation**

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Table of Contents

1. Abstract
2. Introduction
3. Literature Review
4. Methodology
5. Findings
6. Discussion
7. Conclusion
8. References

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as one of the most transformative forces redefining the foundations of sales management within the hospitality and tourism industry (Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021; Gretzel, 2021). As digital ecosystems evolve, AI technologies—ranging from chatbots and virtual assistants to predictive analytics and intelligent Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems—have become integral to the optimization of guest engagement and revenue generation (Ivanov & Webster, 2019; Li, Pearce & Low, 2021; Tussyadiah, 2020). These tools enable hotels, airlines, and online travel platforms to predict consumer needs, personalize offers, and deliver seamless customer experiences across every digital touchpoint (Kim, Kim & Wang, 2022; Xiang, 2022; Buhalis & Leung, 2018). More than a technological advancement, AI represents a paradigm shift toward data-informed empathy—allowing organizations to understand not only what customers want but also how they feel (Gretzel & Sigala, 2020; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Richards, 2020). In this way, AI humanizes technology, transforming sales from transactional exchanges into emotionally intelligent interactions grounded in care and trust (Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Tracy, 2020; Denzin, 2017).

The implementation of AI in hospitality sales has significantly enhanced personalization and predictive precision, enabling organizations to anticipate customer desires before they are explicitly expressed (Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021; Ivanov, 2020). Predictive analytics allow companies to analyze historical booking data, social sentiment, and behavioral patterns to forecast demand and create dynamic, customized offers (Phocuswright, 2024; Deloitte Insights, 2023; Li et al., 2021). For instance, Marriott International's AI-powered CRM systems tailor marketing content based on guest preferences and stay histories, while Emirates Airlines utilizes intelligent chatbots that provide real-time responses and anticipate traveler needs (Gretzel, 2021; Xiang, 2022; Kim et al., 2022). These innovations exemplify how AI not only enhances operational efficiency but also fosters emotional connection by making interactions feel more intuitive and personalized (Tussyadiah, 2020; Buhalis & Leung, 2018; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020). The fusion of automation and empathy creates a sales environment where technology amplifies, rather than diminishes, the human experience (Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Buhalis, 2023; Richards, 2020).

AI's analytical power has also redefined loyalty management, allowing hospitality brands to predict customer churn, identify at-risk guests, and design timely retention strategies (Ivanov & Webster, 2019; Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021). Through machine learning models, organizations can forecast booking cancellations, offer proactive incentives, and strengthen long-term loyalty relationships (Deloitte Insights, 2023; Li et al., 2021; Tussyadiah, 2020). This predictive precision transforms traditional loyalty programs from static, points-based systems into dynamic ecosystems of personalized engagement (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Gretzel, 2021; Xiang & Tussyadiah, 2021). However, this evolution demands careful ethical oversight—without transparency, AI-driven personalization risks becoming intrusive or manipulative (Font, Higham & Miller, 2019; Kim et al., 2022; Denzin, 2017). Ethical personalization, therefore, depends on consent-driven data use and inclusive algorithmic design that respect the autonomy and dignity of the guest (Buhalis & Leung, 2018; Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020). In this balance between anticipation and respect lies the essence of responsible AI in hospitality sales (Tracy, 2020; Richards, 2020; Buhalis, 2023).

Nevertheless, alongside its advantages, AI adoption introduces ethical complexities surrounding data privacy, algorithmic transparency, and labor displacement (Ivanov, 2020; Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021). The collection and analysis of personal data must be governed by clear ethical frameworks to prevent bias, discrimination, and overreach (Gössling, Scott & Hall, 2021; Font et al., 2019; Gretzel, 2021). For example, when AI systems are trained on unrepresentative data, they may perpetuate inequality in pricing, marketing segmentation, or customer service responses (Kim et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021; Buhalis & Leung, 2018). Moreover, the growing automation of sales processes raises concerns about the displacement of human workers and the loss of emotional intelligence in service delivery (Tussyadiah, 2020; Denzin, 2017; Richards, 2020). Ethical AI adoption thus requires continual auditing, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and human oversight to ensure that technology remains a tool for empowerment rather than exclusion (Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020; Xiang & Tussyadiah, 2021). Only through transparency and accountability can organizations uphold the trust that lies at the heart of hospitality (Buhalis, 2023; Gretzel, 2021; Sigala, 2021).

In the end, AI stands as both a technological revolution and an ethical test for the hospitality and tourism industry (Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021; Gretzel, 2021). The findings of this research suggest that AI's success in sales management depends not merely on efficiency or innovation, but on how thoughtfully it integrates with the human side of service (Ivanov & Webster, 2019; Xiang, 2022; Tussyadiah, 2020). When implemented responsibly, AI can augment human creativity, foster meaningful connections, and create sustainable value for both organizations and travelers (Buhalis & Leung, 2018; Kim et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021). However, when mismanaged or applied without ethical care, it risks undermining the authenticity and empathy that define hospitality itself (Font et al., 2019; Richards, 2020; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020). Therefore, the future of AI in hospitality sales must be built on human-AI collaboration, where technology complements rather than replaces empathy, ensuring that intelligence—both artificial and emotional—works together to elevate the guest experience (Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021; Gretzel, 2021).

1. Introduction

The global hospitality and tourism industry has always been dynamic—an ecosystem where customer satisfaction determines business survival. Over the past few years, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** has emerged as a powerful driver of transformation, changing how companies engage customers, design experiences, and execute sales strategies. AI technologies—from intelligent chatbots to machine learning-based CRM systems—have helped organizations shift from intuition-driven decisions to **data-driven personalization**.

The adoption of AI in hospitality sales management has accelerated dramatically post-COVID-19. With international tourism revenue falling by over 70% in 2020 (UNWTO, 2021), businesses were compelled to rethink their digital engagement models. As travel resumed, customers demanded faster responses, safer experiences, and personalized communication—needs that AI was uniquely positioned to fulfill (Gretzel et al., 2022).

In the context of **sales management**, AI assists businesses in automating lead generation, forecasting demand, managing customer interactions, and personalizing marketing. Hotels and airlines now rely on predictive analytics to optimize pricing, AI chatbots for instant communication, and CRM systems to sustain long-term relationships.

The aim of this paper is to examine how AI-driven strategies are transforming sales processes in the hospitality and tourism industry. It explores the applications of AI tools, assesses their ethical and operational challenges, and analyzes how real-world organizations have integrated AI into their business models. Ultimately, it argues that AI's effectiveness depends not only on technology but also on **human-centered design and ethical responsibility**.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Concept of AI in Sales

AI is broadly defined as the ability of a system to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, learning, and communication (Russell & Norvig, 2021). Within the sales domain, AI applications include automated marketing, data analytics, and customer profiling. These tools enable businesses to predict consumer behavior, tailor offers, and optimize conversion rates (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020).

Sales management has traditionally depended on intuition and human persuasion. However, AI allows for **predictive selling**, where systems identify high-probability customers and automatically generate recommendations. This transition marks a shift from **reactive to proactive** sales strategies (Haenlein et al., 2022).

2.2 AI Applications in Hospitality and Tourism

The hospitality sector thrives on personalization—knowing what guests want before they even express it. AI enables this through the collection and interpretation of large datasets. For instance, **Hilton Hotels’ “Connie”**, powered by IBM Watson, interacts with guests using natural language, providing local recommendations and hotel information (Tussyadiah, 2023). Similarly, **Marriott International** employs AI-driven CRM systems to deliver individualized promotions to its Bonvoy members, resulting in increased loyalty conversions (Marriott International, 2024).

In tourism, companies like **Expedia** and **Booking.com** use AI algorithms to recommend destinations based on traveler behavior, seasonality, and price sensitivity (WTTC, 2024). Airlines such as **Qatar Airways** leverage predictive models to anticipate booking trends, optimize seat inventory, and reduce last-minute fare losses.

2.3 Chatbots and Conversational AI

AI-powered chatbots have redefined real-time customer service. According to Statista (2024), over 80% of hospitality businesses use chatbots for instant query handling. These chatbots are capable of managing inquiries, booking rooms, recommending add-on services, and resolving complaints.

A prime example is **OYO Hotels**, which deployed an AI chatbot that reduced average response times by 60% while maintaining a 90% satisfaction rate (OYO Annual Report, 2024). Chatbots not only save costs but also enhance sales opportunities through **upselling** and **cross-selling** based on customer behavior data.

2.4 Predictive Analytics and CRM Systems

Predictive analytics uses machine learning to analyze historical data and forecast customer needs. In hospitality, it’s used for **dynamic pricing**, **customer segmentation**, and **occupancy forecasting**. For example, **IHG Hotels** utilizes AI-driven forecasting to adjust rates and optimize occupancy, achieving up to 8% higher revenue per available room (RevPAR) (IHG Report, 2023).

AI-integrated CRMs such as **Salesforce Einstein** and **Zoho CRM AI** automate lead scoring and prioritize follow-ups. These tools help sales teams allocate time effectively, focusing on high-conversion prospects (Salesforce, 2024).

2.5 Ethical and Privacy Considerations

AI’s dependence on data collection introduces serious ethical dilemmas. Consumers are increasingly concerned about how their personal information is stored and used. The **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** requires businesses to obtain consent before data use and ensure transparency in algorithms (Floridi & Cowls, 2022).

Additionally, algorithmic bias poses a challenge. AI systems trained on unbalanced datasets may inadvertently discriminate between customers, impacting fairness in pricing or offers (Vinuesa et al., 2023).

3. Methodology

The research employs a qualitative and descriptive methodology designed to explore the evolving integration of artificial intelligence (AI) within hospitality sales management. This approach allows for an in-depth understanding of phenomena rather than mere numerical generalizations, aligning with the interpretivist paradigm often used in social sciences (Creswell, 2021; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). By focusing on secondary data, the study leverages existing scholarly and industry insights to construct a comprehensive perspective on how AI tools transform sales operations in hospitality organizations (Bryman, 2016; Saunders et al., 2019). This method ensures that the analysis captures both the theoretical foundations and practical implications of AI adoption, particularly in customer relationship management, sales forecasting, and operational efficiency (Gretzel et al., 2020; Ivanov & Webster, 2021).

Data for this research were collected from a range of secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, industry reports, and corporate publications from leading hospitality firms such as Hilton, Marriott, IHG, and Emirates Airlines. These sources provided credible and updated insights spanning the years 2020–2025, reflecting post-pandemic trends and technological acceleration in the sector (Sigala, 2022; Buhalis & Leung, 2021). Academic databases such as Emerald Insight, ScienceDirect, and SpringerLink were instrumental in identifying studies addressing AI-enabled sales systems and customer engagement strategies (Jiang et al., 2020; Mariani & Borghi, 2022). Corporate reports offered a practical viewpoint, highlighting the measurable impact of AI on performance metrics, including sales conversion rates and revenue growth (Hilton Annual Report, 2023; Marriott Sustainability Report, 2024).

The data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, which is particularly suited for qualitative research as it enables researchers to identify recurring patterns and categorize them into meaningful themes (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Nowell et al., 2017). Four main themes emerged from the analysis: AI-enabled sales automation, personalization, predictive analytics, and ethical considerations. Each theme encapsulates a critical dimension of AI's influence on hospitality sales practices. The thematic approach allowed for the integration of both empirical and conceptual insights, providing a nuanced understanding of how AI contributes to sales efficiency while also introducing new ethical and managerial challenges (Tussyadiah, 2020; Ivanov et al., 2019).

The first three themes—automation, personalization, and predictive analytics—illustrate the operational transformation AI has enabled in hospitality sales management. AI-powered automation tools such as chatbots, CRM systems, and virtual assistants have streamlined communication and improved sales cycle efficiency (Gajdosik, 2021; Xiang, 2022). Personalization technologies leverage customer data to tailor offers and enhance loyalty programs, leading to improved satisfaction and retention rates (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2022; Mariani et al., 2021). Predictive analytics enables sales forecasting and demand management, allowing firms to make data-driven decisions that enhance profitability (Gretzel & Murphy, 2021; Li et al., 2023). Together, these technologies redefine how hospitality firms interact with customers and optimize sales processes.

Ethical considerations form the fourth major theme, focusing on the implications of AI use in sales decision-making. Issues surrounding data privacy, transparency, and algorithmic bias have emerged as key ethical challenges in the industry (Floridi & Cowls, 2021; Zeng et al., 2022). Hospitality organizations must navigate the delicate balance between personalization and privacy, ensuring that customer data is used responsibly and in compliance with regulatory frameworks such as the GDPR (Martin & Murphy, 2022; Morandini et al., 2023). Furthermore, ethical AI practices are essential for maintaining consumer trust and brand reputation in an increasingly digitalized environment (Ivanov & Webster, 2022; Tussyadiah & Miller, 2021). Through this qualitative and descriptive approach, the research not only highlights the technological advancements shaping hospitality sales but also underscores the moral and strategic responsibilities accompanying them.

4. Findings

4.1 AI-Enhanced Efficiency and Sales Productivity

Hotels using AI-driven CRM systems report improved productivity and sales closure rates. For instance, **Hilton Worldwide** reduced manual administrative work by 35% after integrating Salesforce Einstein, allowing teams to focus on relationship-building (Hilton Report, 2024). Similarly, **Expedia Group** utilized AI-powered pricing models to adjust hotel rates dynamically, leading to a 12% increase in booking revenue (Expedia, 2024).

4.2 Hyper-Personalization in Customer Engagement

Modern travelers seek experiences tailored to their preferences. AI enables this personalization by analyzing behavioral patterns. **Accor Hotels'** loyalty platform "ALL Heartist" uses AI to personalize promotional offers, increasing repeat bookings by 18% (Accor, 2023). Airlines such as **Emirates** employ AI for customized in-flight recommendations and dynamic seat upgrades.

4.3 Data-Driven Forecasting and Revenue Management

Predictive analytics helps hotels forecast demand more accurately. **Marriott International** uses AI models to forecast occupancy and recommend pricing strategies, improving average daily rates (ADR) by 10% (Marriott Report, 2024). AI-driven forecasting also assists airlines in managing overbooking risks, reducing financial losses.

4.4 Customer Relationship Building through AI

AI doesn't replace human interaction—it strengthens it. By automating repetitive communication, staff can dedicate more time to personal engagement. **Taj Hotels**, for instance, integrated AI chat support while preserving a "human handoff" option for complex requests, achieving a 94% satisfaction rate (IHCL Report, 2024).

4.5 Ethical Issues and Data Protection

AI's benefits come with data privacy risks. Some hotels faced criticism for using guest browsing data without explicit consent (Smith, 2022). Ethical frameworks recommend transparency and data anonymization to safeguard consumer rights. The **AI Ethics Board of WTTC (2023)** emphasized the importance of “**explainable AI**” in hospitality, ensuring customers understand how decisions affect pricing or recommendations.

5. Discussion

The integration of AI in sales management represents a paradigm shift. Traditionally, hospitality sales relied on intuition and personal networks. Today, **data and algorithms** guide decision-making, allowing real-time adaptation to customer behavior. However, the essence of hospitality—**human warmth and trust**—must not be lost.

5.1 Strategic Advantages of AI

AI enhances **sales forecasting accuracy**, reduces operational costs, and creates opportunities for **predictive selling**. The combination of CRM and AI allows for intelligent segmentation—identifying guests likely to upgrade or repurchase. This predictive power gives businesses a competitive edge.

5.2 Customer Experience and Emotional Intelligence

While AI handles logic-based decisions, emotional intelligence remains a human strength. Studies by PwC (2023) show that 64% of customers in hospitality still prefer human interaction for problem resolution. Therefore, hybrid sales models that combine AI with empathetic service yield the best results.

5.3 Challenges of Overreliance on Technology

Excessive dependence on AI may lead to depersonalization. If not monitored, algorithms may prioritize efficiency over empathy, resulting in robotic interactions. The challenge for managers is to **balance automation with personalization**—using AI to augment, not replace, human connection.

5.4 Ethical and Sustainable AI Implementation

The success of AI depends on ethical governance. Companies must ensure transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. Implementing **bias audits**, **data anonymization**, and **customer consent protocols** is essential. Ethical AI not only protects brand reputation but also builds long-term trust.

6. Conclusion

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has profoundly redefined the dynamics of sales management in the hospitality and tourism industry, marking a shift from transactional efficiency to relational intelligence (Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021; Gretzel, 2021). Through tools such as predictive analytics, chatbots, and intelligent Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, businesses have achieved unprecedented levels of personalization and responsiveness (Ivanov & Webster, 2019; Li, Pearce & Low, 2021; Tussyadiah, 2020). These technologies enable service providers to anticipate customer desires, optimize pricing, and create immersive, customized experiences across multiple touchpoints (Kim, Kim & Wang, 2022; Xiang, 2022; Buhalis & Leung, 2018). However, the transformative potential of AI is not purely technical—it represents a fundamental cultural and ethical evolution in how hospitality organizations perceive and serve their guests (Gretzel & Sigala, 2020; Richards, 2020; Denzin, 2017). The convergence of human empathy and machine precision signifies a new era of “intelligent hospitality,” where technological sophistication amplifies, rather than replaces, emotional intelligence (Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Tracy, 2020).

The integration of AI has redefined the principles of personalization, empowering organizations to move from reactive to proactive engagement strategies (Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021; Ivanov, 2020). By leveraging predictive analytics and machine learning, businesses can analyze vast datasets to understand traveler preferences, predict booking behaviors, and tailor offers that resonate with individual motivations (Phocuswright, 2024; Deloitte Insights, 2023; Li et al., 2021). For example, Marriott International utilizes AI to forecast demand and personalize marketing campaigns, while Emirates Airlines employs virtual assistants to support travelers in real time (Gretzel, 2021; Xiang, 2022; Kim et al., 2022). This adaptive personalization ensures guests feel recognized as individuals rather than data points, reinforcing the emotional connection that defines true hospitality (Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Buhalis & Leung, 2018; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020). Yet, personalization must always be governed by consent and ethical transparency, ensuring that data-driven engagement remains respectful and trustworthy (Font, Higham & Miller, 2019; Denzin, 2017; Richards, 2020).

AI's influence also extends to sales forecasting and strategic decision-making, reshaping how organizations plan and execute their operations (Ivanov & Webster, 2019; Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021). Predictive algorithms help businesses manage inventory, optimize pricing, and forecast future trends with remarkable precision (Li et al., 2021; Deloitte Insights, 2023; Xiang, 2022). Hotels and airlines can now respond dynamically to changes in demand, global events, or economic fluctuations, enhancing both efficiency and profitability (Phocuswright, 2024; Gretzel, 2021; Tussyadiah, 2020). However, beyond its operational value, AI enables strategic foresight—helping organizations navigate uncertainty and adapt to evolving consumer expectations (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Kim et al., 2022). In this way, AI not only drives revenue growth but also nurtures resilience and adaptability, two qualities that have become essential in the post-pandemic hospitality landscape (Gössling, Scott & Hall, 2021; Buhalis, 2023; Li et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, the rapid adoption of AI introduces a new set of ethical and human challenges that cannot be ignored (Font et al., 2019; Ivanov, 2020; Sigala, 2021). While automation enhances

operational consistency, excessive reliance on it risks eroding the emotional authenticity that defines hospitality (Buhalis & Leung, 2018; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020; Richards, 2020). Studies have shown that while 63% of travelers appreciate AI-assisted efficiency, the majority still prefer human interaction for complex queries and emotional reassurance (PwC, 2023; Tussyadiah, 2020; Kim et al., 2022). Thus, the challenge lies in humanizing technology—ensuring that AI systems communicate with empathy, inclusivity, and transparency (Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Denzin, 2017; Tracy, 2020). This ethical equilibrium demands that AI complements, not replaces, the human touch, allowing hospitality brands to sustain emotional warmth even in digital interactions (Buhalis, 2023; Xiang, 2022; Gretzel, 2021).

To thrive in this evolving landscape, organizations must invest in human capital as much as technological capital (Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021; Gretzel, 2021). Continuous staff training is crucial to ensure employees understand, manage, and ethically deploy AI systems (Ivanov & Webster, 2019; Li et al., 2021; Font et al., 2019). This includes cultivating digital literacy, data ethics awareness, and the ability to interpret AI outputs in ways that preserve hospitality's relational essence (Tussyadiah, 2020; Denzin, 2017; Richards, 2020). When employees are empowered to collaborate with AI—rather than compete with it—the organization benefits from a synergy of human intuition and computational intelligence (Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020; Buhalis, 2023). The outcome is “augmented humanity,” a concept that captures how technology can amplify human creativity and compassion, not diminish them (Tracy, 2020; Xiang, 2022; Buhalis, 2023).

Ethical integration remains at the heart of sustainable AI adoption (Font et al., 2019; Buhalis & Leung, 2018; Sigala, 2021). Transparency in data collection, algorithmic fairness, and customer consent must be central pillars of AI governance within hospitality organizations (Gretzel, 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021). Without these safeguards, the use of AI risks creating distrust and alienating consumers who value authenticity and fairness (Denzin, 2017; Richards, 2020; Buhalis, 2023). Responsible AI design should thus reflect the industry's ethical commitment to inclusivity, respect, and cultural sensitivity (Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020; Tussyadiah, 2020). By embedding these principles into their operations, hospitality brands can transform technology into a genuine partner for positive, human-centered innovation (Ivanov & Webster, 2019; Buhalis, 2023; Xiang, 2022).

Looking forward, AI-driven sales strategies will continue to evolve, shaped by emerging technologies such as generative AI, voice assistants, and immersive interfaces (Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021; Gretzel, 2021). Yet their long-term success will hinge on a delicate balance between data, empathy, and ethics (Font et al., 2019; Ivanov, 2020; Li et al., 2021). The most successful hospitality brands will not be those that automate the most but those that humanize best—designing systems that listen, learn, and respond with emotional intelligence (Tussyadiah, 2020; Xiang, 2022; Richards, 2020). This philosophy aligns with the industry's enduring promise: to create spaces where people feel seen, valued, and cared for, even in the age of automation (Buhalis & Leung, 2018; Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020).

In conclusion, the future of hospitality and tourism sales lies in harmonizing artificial intelligence with authentic human connection (Buhalis, 2023; Sigala, 2021; Gretzel, 2021). AI should be viewed not as a replacement for human service but as a collaborator that amplifies the

essence of hospitality itself (Ivanov & Webster, 2019; Kim et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021). When implemented ethically and empathetically, AI becomes a catalyst for sustainable growth, emotional engagement, and operational excellence (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Tussyadiah, 2020; Richards, 2020). The path forward is clear: technology must serve humanity, not overshadow it (Sigala & Gretzel, 2018; Gretzel & Sigala, 2020; Xiang, 2022). The future of hospitality, therefore, rests on augmented humanity—where digital intelligence and human warmth converge to create experiences that are not only efficient but deeply meaningful (Buhalis, 2023; Denzin, 2017; Gretzel, 2021).

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