MEDIA WISATA
ISSN 16935969 - EISSN 26858436
Volume 24, Number 1, 2026
http://jurnal.ampta.ac.id/index.php/MWS
Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat
Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata AMPTA, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

TASK TO TECH: AN EXPLORATION OF GENERATIVE AI IN TOURISM MARKETING THROUGH STUDENT EXPERIMENTS AND PRACTITIONER INTERVIEWS

Dicky Arsyul Salam[1], *Rifki Rahmanda Putra[2]
[1]Politeknik Pariwisata NHI Bandung, Kota Bandung, Indonesia
[2]Politeknik Pariwisata NHI Bandung, Kota Bandung, Indonesia, Email: rifki@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id
*(Correspondence author)

ABSTRACT

Article History

Submitted:
22 September 2025
Reviewed:
27 March 2026
Accepted:
1 April 2026
Published:
15 May 2026

This study investigates the adoption and impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in tourism marketing, exploring the intersection of technology performance, user adoption, and task suitability through the dual perspectives of emerging talent and established professionals. A multi-method research design was employed, combining a Pre-Experimental Designs With Intact-Group Comparison Model with higher education tourism students and semi-structured interviews with industry practitioners. The experiment compared the performance of a control group against an AI-prompted group on standardized marketing tasks. The interviews explored real-world adoption drivers, guided by an integrated framework of Task-Technology Fit (TTF) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). Experimental results demonstrate that GenAI significantly enhances efficiency across all tasks. However, its impact on quality is task-dependent: it modestly improves long-form text, has a neutral effect on short-form content, and markedly decreases the quality of visual design outputs. The qualitative findings reveal that practitioner adoption is primarily driven by high TTF and strong Performance Expectancy. The study also identifies Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, and Facilitating Conditions as key factors, while highlighting Digital Literacy as a critical, overarching moderator that governs the effective utilization of AI tools. The study advocates for a fundamental shift in tourism education and professional development toward fostering critical AI literacy to ensure technology is leveraged as a collaborative tool that augments, rather than compromises, strategic and creative quality.

Keywords: Generative AI; Tourism; Marketing

INTRODUCTION

A significant technological shift is underway, reshaping the contours of the digital world and, by extension, the industries that thrive within it. The last decade has been characterized by remarkable strides in Artificial Intelligence (AI), moving from a background force optimizing business decisions to a direct, accessible collaborator in our daily tasks (Celiktutan et al., 2024a). This transition has been

powerfully accelerated by the recent emergence and widespread public adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). Unlike their predecessors, which were primarily analytical, these new tools are fundamentally creative. Platforms such as ChatGPT, Midjourney, and DALL-E2 are engineered to generate novel content from sophisticated text and computer code to intricate images based on simple human prompts (Celiktutan et al., 2024a).

The arrival of ChatGPT in November 2022 marked a pivotal moment in this evolution. Its user-friendly interface and free accessibility democratized advanced AI, making it available to a global audience without the need for specialized expertise (Celiktutan et al., 2024a). The platform's growth was nothing short of explosive, attracting over a million users within its first five days of launch a testament to its perceived utility and intuitive design (Dwivedi et al., 2023a). This rapid integration of GenAI into everyday life, from drafting business contracts and writing poetry to developing complex marketing plans, has solidified its role as a versatile and powerful assistant (Celiktutan et al., 2024a; Dwivedi et al., 2023a). Consequently, this diffusion has ignited vigorous debates across academic, scientific, and corporate spheres regarding the ethical boundaries and acceptable applications of this technology (Acar, 2024a; Celiktutan et al., 2024a). For the marketing industry, in particular, the consensus is that we have entered a "transformative era," where the very foundations of content creation, customer engagement, and strategic planning are being reimagined (Gupta et al., 2024).

Nowhere are the reverberations of this technological wave felt more keenly than in the tourism sector. An industry built on storytelling, inspiration, and personalized experiences, tourism has shown considerable enthusiasm for the potential that AI, machine learning, and now GenAI tools bring to its dynamic ecosystem (Dwivedi et al., 2023a). The capacity of GenAI to streamline core marketing functions from initial ideation and market research to the final generation of content presents an opportunity for unprecedented efficiency, freeing human marketers from repetitive tasks to focus on higher-level strategy (Gupta et al., 2024).

The applications within tourism marketing are both broad and deep. At its most fundamental level, GenAI addresses the relentless demand for fresh, engaging promotional material. Marketers can now produce content at a scale previously unimaginable, generating compelling product descriptions, insightful blog articles, and timely social media updates with remarkable speed (Gupta et al., 2024). Beyond mere volume, these tools can enhance quality and effectiveness; for instance, ChatGPT can generate captivating headlines for campaigns or strategically weave in keywords to optimize content for search engines (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Dwivedi et al., 2023b). By integrating these AI systems with a brand's unique voice and style guides, organizations can ensure remarkable consistency across all communication channels (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024).

Perhaps the most heralded capability of GenAI in this context is its power to facilitate "hyperpersonalization." By analyzing vast datasets of customer behavior, past interactions, and stated preferences, these tools can yield profound insights that allow marketers to craft bespoke messages (Gupta et al., 2024). This moves

beyond simple segmentation into a realm where advertisements, email campaigns, and even loyalty programs are dynamically tailored to the individual, dramatically increasing the likelihood of resonance and conversion (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024). The technology also serves as a powerful analytical engine. Marketers can leverage ChatGPT to sift through customer conversations from social media, review sites, and chatbots, identifying emerging trends, gauging sentiment, and pinpointing areas for service improvement (Aldaihani et al., 2024; Gupta et al., 2024). This analytical prowess extends to broader market research, where GenAI can help agencies identify core customer segments or even pinpoint promising influencers for collaboration (Celiktutan et al., 2024a).

From a strategic standpoint, GenAI acts as a valuable partner in campaign development, assisting with brainstorming and refining strategic approaches to enhance cross-selling, up-selling, and lead generation (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024). The ability of these platforms to process and synthesize enormous volumes of information equips tourism managers and policymakers with a tool to bolster their decision-making, potentially leading to a significant enhancement of a company's or a destination's competitive edge (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024).

The operational benefits for the tourism industry are equally compelling. GenAI can power real-time, responsive dialogues with customers, managing bookings and fielding traveler inquiries with human-like proficiency (Gupta et al., 2024; Issakov et al., 2024a). It can automate concierge services, providing guests with instant access to directions or local information, and even offer multilingual support to break down communication barriers (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Dwivedi et al., 2023a; Issakov et al., 2024a). For the traveler, this technology offers a personalized trip-planning assistant, capable of generating bespoke itineraries based on their unique interests (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Dwivedi et al., 2023a). For Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), the applications are transformative, from analyzing travel blogs to understand a destination's popular attributes to managing tourist flows in real-time by suggesting itineraries that guide visitors to less congested areas (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024).

However, the rapid proliferation of such a disruptive technology creates a critical challenge that lies at the heart of this research: understanding its adoption and impact on both the future and current workforce. It is simply unrealistic to expect that individuals whether they are students preparing to enter the industry or seasoned professionals already in it will abstain from using tools that offer such clear advantages (Celiktutan et al., 2024b). This reality has sent tremors through educational systems, which are now grappling with how to adapt (Ţală et al., 2024). Initial reactions from some institutions to ban platforms like ChatGPT have largely given way to a more progressive exploration of how GenAI can, in fact, enrich the learning process (Acar, 2024a). There is a growing recognition that to ignore this technology is to graduate students ill-prepared for a professional world where AI proficiency is fast becoming a key competency sought by employers (Acar, 2024a).

When thoughtfully integrated, GenAI can offer personalized, 24/7 academic support, allowing learners to engage with course material at a pace and depth that

suits their individual needs (Acar, 2024a; Dwivedi et al., 2023a). Yet, this opportunity is shadowed by a significant risk: the potential for over-reliance on these tools to erode students' foundational skills in critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and original analysis (Acar, 2024a; Dwivedi et al., 2023a; Iskender, 2023). Therefore, the onus is on educators not to prohibit, but to guide. They must restructure curricula to foster a new kind of literacy the ability to collaborate effectively with machines, to critically evaluate AI-generated output, and to understand the inherent limitations and biases of these systems (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Dwivedi et al., 2023a).

This same imperative extends to established professionals. Within the corporate world, GenAI usage is already most prevalent in marketing and sales departments (Celiktutan et al., 2024a). For managers, integrating this technology is not a simple plug-and-play solution. It requires a deep understanding of how GenAI reshapes workflows and a strategic approach to upskilling their teams to foster seamless human-machine collaboration (Gupta et al., 2024; Issakov et al., 2024b). A delicate equilibrium must be maintained. As organizations embrace automation, they must be wary of sacrificing the authentic human touch that underpins strong customer relationships (Gupta et al., 2024). Indeed, emerging research suggests that customers may devalue services if they perceive a lack of human contribution in AI-assisted outputs (Celiktutan et al., 2024a).

Furthermore, practitioners must act as vigilant validators of GenAI content, ensuring its accuracy and alignment with brand messaging, as an uncritical reliance on these tools can lead to factual errors or generic, uninspired marketing (Gupta et al., 2024). Navigating this new terrain involves complex considerations of transparency, data privacy, and ethical responsibility (Gupta et al., 2024). Theories of technology adoption, such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), provide a useful lens for understanding the factors like perceived usefulness and ease of use that will influence how readily these tools are embraced within organizations (Gupta et al., 2024). To ignore GenAI is to risk obsolescence, yet to adopt it without foresight is to risk alienating customers and diluting brand identity.

Erdős et al., (2025) in their research, that research related to AI in tourism has been widely discussed under the theme of Marketing & Consumer Engagement (Giotis & Papadionysiou, 2022; Leung, 2020; Chen et al., 2022b; Li et al., 2024); Sujood & Pancy, 2024; Blanco-Moreno et al., 2024). However, the focus is limited to AI-driven market segmentation, targeted advertising, sentiment analysis of reviews, eWom stimulation, immersive experience marketing, and social media emotional analysis for marketing decisions. Not much research discusses experiments on the use of GenAI in tourism marketing learning practices. This study, therefore, is positioned at the intersection of this technological disruption and its human implications, exploring how both students and practitioners in tourism marketing are navigating the transition from traditional tasks to tech-augmented futures.

Despite the increasing attention on the role of GenAI in transforming tourism marketing, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding its empirical assessment, particularly in terms of its impact on marketing tasks and the factors driving its adoption. This study addresses this gap by comparing two distinct

contexts: the controlled, task-oriented use of GenAI by students and the more holistic, strategy-driven application by tourism marketing practitioners. Accordingly, the research has three main objectives. First, to experimentally evaluate the extent to which GenAI influences student performance in completing tourism marketing tasks. Second, to identify the key applications, benefits, and challenges experienced by practitioners when leveraging GenAI in real-world tourism marketing strategies. Third, to apply an integrated TTF and UTAUT framework to examine the adoption drivers of GenAI across both groups. Through this approach, the study aims to provide theoretical and practical insights into how GenAI is reshaping tourism marketing education and professional practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generative AI in Tourism Marketing

The rise of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has triggered a paradigm shift, reshaping creative and professional domains with tools such as ChatGPT and Midjourney. Far from being a minor technological upgrade, GenAI functions as a transformative force in digital and tourism marketing (Celiktutan et al., 2024a; Dwivedi et al., 2023a; Gupta et al., 2024a). At its core, this technology generates novel and relevant content by synthesizing vast datasets from literature, art, and music (Gupta et al., 2024a). Its rapid adoption has fostered intense scholarly and industry dialogue, highlighting both the potential and the challenges for current professionals as well as future practitioners (Celiktutan et al., 2024a).

One of the main drivers of interest in GenAI lies in its ability to enhance marketing functions through advanced content creation and personalization. Frequently labeled as a "game-changer," it allows marketers to produce tailored and diverse content from detailed product descriptions to persuasive social media posts on an unprecedented scale (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024a). ChatGPT, for example, not only supports content writing but also assists with campaign brainstorming, headline crafting, and search engine optimization (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024a). On the visual side, platforms like DALL-E2 and Midjourney produce creative imagery for campaigns (Celiktutan et al., 2024a; Dwivedi et al., 2023a; Gupta et al., 2024a), while major platforms such as Google, Meta, and TikTok have integrated GenAI to dynamically assemble ads (Hocutt, 2024).

Beyond content, GenAI enables hyperpersonalization by analyzing massive consumer datasets to deliver individualized recommendations. This capacity extends from generating targeted advertisements and loyalty programs (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024a; Gupta et al., 2024b) to processing unstructured data, such as social media comments or chatbot interactions, for actionable insights (Gupta et al., 2024a). Firms can thus adjust offerings in near real-time and anticipate market trends (Aldaihani et al., 2024; Gupta et al., 2024a). Marketing agencies increasingly employ GenAI for deeper consumer and market analysis (Celiktutan et

al., 2024a), while practitioners benefit from improved efficiency in designing campaigns and qualifying leads (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024a).

The tourism industry, driven by experiences and inspiration, has been especially receptive to GenAI (Dwivedi et al., 2023a; Gupta et al., 2024a). The technology streamlines ideation, research, and content generation, saving significant resources (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024a). For DMOs and operators, GenAI ensures consistent promotional output aligned with brand tone (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024a). It also supports personalized travel planning through ChatGPT, which can recommend destinations, activities, and accommodations, even creating itineraries adapted to budgets or dietary preferences (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Iskender, 2023). Customer service is enhanced by AI-driven chatbots capable of managing bookings and resolving complaints, as shown by KLM's ChatGPT-powered system (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Issakov et al., 2024a; Gupta et al., 2024a). On a strategic level, DMOs use GenAI to analyze digital footprints, manage tourist flows sustainably, and access AI-as-a-Service (AIaaS) platforms that make the technology accessible to SMEs (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024).

Academic discourse reflects both enthusiasm and caution. Early works emphasized GenAI's potential in marketing transformation (Islam et al., 2024; Dwivedi et al., 2023c; Gupta et al., 2024c) and mapped its applications and risks in tourism (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Raman et al., 2024). Empirical research has highlighted ChatGPT-4's utility in designing tours (Issakov et al., 2024a) and even engaged AI as a research subject to confirm its potential in marketing and personalization (Iskender, 2023). Adoption studies often use TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) and TOE (Technology-Organization-Environment) frameworks (Gupta et al., 2024a). However, scholars warn of risks including diminished human connection, biased outputs, and content quality issues (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Gupta et al., 2024a). Transparency and human oversight are deemed crucial (Dwivedi et al., 2023a; Gupta et al., 2024a). Concerns over job displacement coexist with the recognition of hybrid work models where AI augments human roles, reinforcing the need for updated curricula to prepare tourism professionals for an AI-driven future (Carvalho & Ivanov, 2024; Issakov et al., 2024a; Dwivedi et al., 2023c). Overall, literature portrays GenAI as a transformative yet complex tool whose adoption requires strategic and ethical consideration.

METHOD

This study adopts a multi-method research design to explore the integration of GenAI (in this case using the ChatGPT platform) in tourism marketing. By combining a quantitative approach, which is a Pre-Experimental Designs With Intact-Group Comparison Model (Sugiyono, 2013) with higher education students and a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews with industry practitioners, the approach balances objective performance assessment with contextual professional insights. This dual strategy bridges the classroom and workplace, offering a comprehensive understanding of both emerging talent and real-world adoption.

The study involves two key populations. The first, central to the experimental phase, includes tourism and marketing students in higher education future professionals whose early engagement with GenAI will shape industry practices. A convenience sampling method was applied to access student cohorts for the controlled experiment (12 students in the AI-Introduced Group/Experiment Group and 8 in the Control Group). The second population comprises experienced tourism marketing practitioners with direct use of Gen AI in their professional roles. Using purposive sampling, the study targeted participants with relevant expertise to provide rich insights into adoption challenges, task alignment, and the practical impact of GenAI on their work.

The first phase employed a between-subjects Pre-Experimental Designs With Intact-Group Comparison Model to assess the effect of GenAI on tourism marketing tasks. Students were divided into a Control Group and an Experimental Group, each completing three authentic assignments in 1 – 3 hours: (1) a 500-word tourism blog post on a trending topic, (2) social media content for a product launch campaign, and (3) a promotional flyer concept. The Control Group used conventional methods without GenAI, while the Experimental Group was given information about specific tools and encouraged to apply them. The students' outputs served as the primary dataset for comparative performance analysis.

The second phase adopted a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews with purposively selected two tourism marketing practitioners those who come from the tourism industry, as a marketing supervisor (Salma) and marketing executive (Riris), and have been using GenAI in their companies as a work aid for the past 3 years. Conducted online, the interviews were recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis. The protocol explored concrete use cases of GenAI in daily practice, focusing on task alignment (Task-Technology Fit), impacts on performance, and adoption factors informed by the UTAUT model (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Mogaji et al., 2024). This design captured both professional experiences and contextual influences ranging from personal attitudes and industry pressures to organizational support thereby providing a deeper understanding of the dynamics behind Gen AI adoption and use.

Given the dual design of this study, the analysis also follows a two-pronged approach. Quantitative data from the student Pre-Experimental Designs With Intact-Group Comparison Model and qualitative insights from practitioner interviews are analyzed with distinct methods, ensuring robustness in each stream while enabling integrative synthesis. This combined approach allows the findings to address the research questions from multiple perspectives.

Student-generated marketing outputs form the basis of the quantitative analysis. A panel of experienced tourism marketing academics and industry professionals will evaluate the submissions using a standardized rubric. Three criteria guide the assessment: (1) Quality, covering professionalism, coherence, accuracy, and task adherence; (2) Creativity, measuring originality and engagement; and (3) Time Completion, reflecting efficiency. Scores will be aggregated and statistically analyzed to compare control and experimental groups, thereby testing whether GenAI usage significantly influences performance outcomes.

Qualitative data from practitioner interviews will be examined through thematic analysis. The process begins with familiarization, followed by systematic coding of relevant text segments. These codes will be organized into potential themes, which will then be refined to ensure alignment with both the coded extracts and the overall dataset. The final themes will capture practitioners' perspectives on GenAI adoption, including its practical applications, perceived task-technology fit, and the personal, social, and organizational factors influencing use.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Generative AI Integration on the peformance

This section presents the empirical results derived from the Pre-Experimental Designs With Intact-Group Comparison Model phase of the study. The experiment was designed to measure the tangible effects of Generative AI integration on the performance of core tourism marketing tasks undertaken by higher education students. The findings reveal a compelling, albeit complex, narrative of significant efficiency gains juxtaposed with a nuanced and highly task-dependent impact on the quality of the final output. The data from the three distinct tasks long-form content creation, short-form social media development, and visual design collectively paint a detailed picture of the opportunities and potential pitfalls of leveraging AI in practice.

Task 1: Blog Post Generation

The first task, which required students to generate a 500-word blog post, yielded clear evidence of GenAI's capacity to enhance both speed and substance in text-heavy creative work. In terms of efficiency, the results were striking. The AI-The Introduced Group demonstrated a profound advantage, completing the task in an average time of 1 hour, 15 minutes, and 8 seconds. This was nearly half the time taken by the Control Group, which averaged 2 hours, 27 minutes, and 14 seconds. This dramatic reduction in completion time underscores AI's powerful role as an accelerator for drafting and ideation.

Beyond mere speed, the data suggests a positive influence on the quality of the work produced. The AI-Introduced Group achieved a slightly higher average quality score of 7.41 out of 10, compared to the Control Group's score of 7.00. While modest, this difference indicates that for complex writing assignments, GenAI can serve as more than a simple tool for efficiency; it can act as a collaborative partner, potentially aiding in structure, tone, and informational breadth, thereby enhancing the final product.

Perhaps the most insightful finding from this task lies in the AI utilization data. Usage was remarkably high across both groups, with 17 students in the AI-Introduced Group and 16 students in the Control Group reporting the use of AI. The high rate of adoption within the Control Group, who received no explicit instruction to use such tools, strongly suggests that students are already independently inclined to leverage AI for demanding, long-form writing tasks. This indicates that its use is

already an embedded, almost default, practice for this type of academic and pre-professional work.

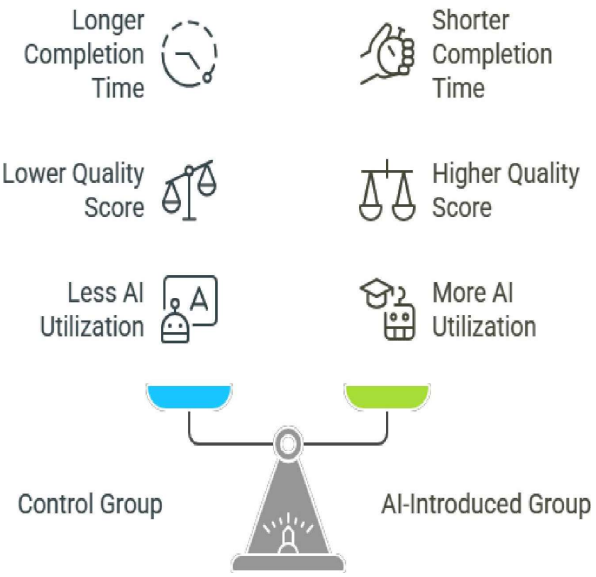

Figure 1. Trial Task 1
Resource: Researcher data (2025)

Task 2: Social Media Content Creation

In the second task, focused on creating engaging posts for a product launch, GenAI's role as a powerful accelerator was once again confirmed. The AI-Introduced Group showcased remarkable efficiency, finishing the task in an average of 1 hour, 44 minutes, and 41 seconds. This was less than half the time recorded for the Control Group, which took an average of 3 hours, 28 minutes, and 46 seconds to complete the same assignment.

However, unlike the blog post task, this efficiency gain did not correlate with a discernible improvement in quality. The average quality scores for the two groups were virtually indistinguishable, with the AI-Introduced Group scoring 7.18 and the Control Group scoring 7.15. This finding suggests that for creating shorter-form, more formulaic content like social media posts, AI functions primarily as a tool for rapid generation and iteration, significantly boosting productivity without materially altering the creative quality of the outcome.

AI utilization for this task was lower than for the blog post, with 12 students in the AI-Introduced Group and 8 in the Control Group using the technology. While adoption was higher when prompted, the data suggests that students perceive a clear, but perhaps less critical, benefit from AI for this type of task compared to the more cognitively demanding challenge of long-form writing.

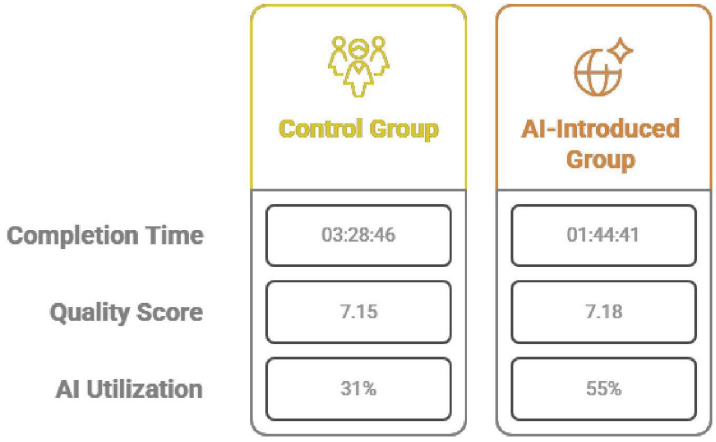

Figure 2. Trial Task 2
Resource: Researcher data (2025)

Task 3: Flyer Design

The third task, designing a flyer for a marketing campaign, presented the most complex and revelatory findings of the experiment. Consistent with the previous tasks, the AI-Introduced Group was substantially faster, completing the design in 1 hour, 52 minutes, and 38 seconds, compared to the Control Group's average of 3 hours, 57 minutes, and 44 seconds.

However, this task marked a notable reversal in the quality trend. The Control Group, working without AI prompting, produced significantly higher quality work, achieving an average score of 7.46. This stands in stark contrast to the AI-Introduced Group's average score of 6.91. This is the only task where being prompted to use AI resulted in a lower quality output, suggesting a potential pitfall in its application for visual design.

The AI utilization data for this task was equally telling. There was a stark difference between the groups: 17 students in the AI-Introduced Group used AI, whereas only a single student in the Control Group did so. This implies that, left to their own devices, students are least likely to turn to AI for graphic design tasks. When explicitly encouraged, their reliance on these tools appears to have compromised the nuance, creativity, and overall quality of the final design, possibly due to an over-reliance on templates or a less developed skill set in prompting for visual outputs.

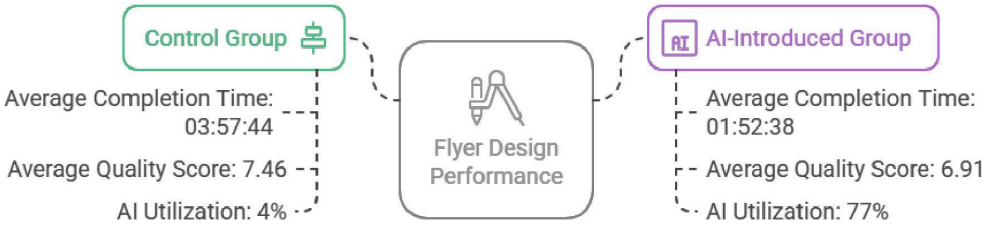

Figure 3. Trial Task 3
Resource: Researcher data (2025)

Synthesis of Experimental Findings

The collective results of the experiment indicate that the integration of AI tools offers students a significant and undeniable advantage in efficiency across a range of common marketing tasks. In every tested scenario, the use of AI drastically reduced the time required for completion. However, the impact of this technology on the quality of work is not uniform; rather, it is highly task-dependent.

For text-centric content creation, such as blog posts, AI appears to be a symbiotic partner, capable of improving both the speed of production and the substantive quality of the output. For short-form content like social media posts, it acts as a powerful accelerator, enabling rapid creation with a negligible effect on quality. Conversely, for visually-oriented design tasks like creating a flyer, a direct reliance on AI appears to be detrimental, leading to a noticeable decrease in quality despite the significant time savings.

Ultimately, this study indicates that while AI is an invaluable asset for enhancing the productivity of future tourism marketers, its application must be strategic and discerning. It is highly effective for accelerating and even improving text generation. However, for design-oriented projects, it should be wielded with caution, perhaps best used as a tool for initial brainstorming rather than as a primary means of production, to ensure that efficiency gains do not come at the cost of quality.

Characteristic	Blog Posts	Social Media Posts	Flyer Design
Efficiency	Improved	Accelerated	Improved
Quality	Improved	Negligible effect	Decreased

Figure 4. AI Impact on Tourism Student Tasks
Resource: Researcher data (2025)

Practitioner Perspectives: Insights from the Field

To complement the quantitative results from the student experiment, a series of in-depth interviews were conducted with established tourism marketing

professionals. This qualitative inquiry was designed to move beyond performance metrics to uncover the lived experiences, motivations, and challenges associated with adopting Generative AI in a real-world professional context. The narratives of the practitioners, Riris and Salma, revealed a rich tapestry of insights that both reinforce and expand upon the study's theoretical frameworks, highlighting several key themes that govern the integration of AI into their daily work.

The Primacy of Task-Technology Fit

A foundational theme that emerged with resounding clarity was the paramount importance of Task-Technology Fit. For both Riris and Salma, the decision to adopt and integrate GenAI was not driven by novelty but by a pragmatic assessment of its ability to solve specific, often laborious, work-related problems. Riris provided a compelling example, explaining how AI tools like ChatGPT have revolutionized her process for creating client-facing materials. She described how AI allows her to rapidly tailor presentations and proposals to the specific needs of each hotel client, a task that, when performed manually, previously consumed upwards of three to four hours. For her, the technology's value is directly tied to its 'fit' with this critical, time-consuming task.

Similarly, Salma, while reflecting on the constraints of her small, two-person team, articulated a desire for a technology with even better 'fit'. She imagined the immense value of an AI tool capable of automatically adjusting sales presentations to align with different market segments, highlighting a perceived gap that a more advanced AI could fill. These perspectives powerfully illustrate that practitioner adoption is fundamentally rooted in a tool's perceived ability to meet the demands of their work in a direct and tangible way.

Performance Expectancy as a Core Motivator

Flowing directly from the principle of 'fit', the expectation of enhanced performance was a strong and consistent driver of AI usage. Both practitioners expressed that the perceived benefits of the technology, particularly in work efficiency, were central to their intention to use it. Riris detailed her use of AI for strategic functions such as website performance analysis and the efficient compilation of presentation materials. Salma highlighted its utility in streamlining her content creation workflow and achieving tangible cost reductions in post-production tasks like photo editing. Their narratives frame AI not as a mere supplement to their work, but as a strategic asset that directly improves their professional output and performance.

The Double-Edged Sword of Effort Expectancy

While the potential benefits of AI were clear, the perceived ease of use or Effort Expectancy emerged as a critical factor that could either foster adoption or create a significant psychological barrier. Salma's experience with ChatGPT exemplifies a positive outcome; she described the tool as *"mudah banget"* (very easy) and "user-friendly," a perception that has led her to integrate it routinely into her daily activities. Its low cognitive barrier made it an accessible and indispensable part of her workflow.

In contrast, Riris's perspective revealed the inhibitive power of high effort expectancy. While expressing a keen interest in the potential of more sophisticated AI Agents, she voiced hesitation due to what she perceived as a *"learning curve yang lebih advance"* (a more advanced learning curve). This perception created a barrier to exploration, demonstrating that even when a technology's potential benefits are recognized, a steep or intimidating learning process can effectively prevent its adoption.

External Drivers: Social Influence and Facilitating Conditions

The interviews also shed light on the role of external factors in the adoption journey. Social Influence appeared to be a stronger initial trigger for Riris, who admitted that she was more inclined to explore new technologies based on recommendations from friends and colleagues. For her, social validation acted as a gateway to discovery. Salma, while acknowledging the role of social trends (giving it a 40% influence score), was more pragmatic, emphasizing that her final decision to adopt a tool always depended on its functional effectiveness in executing her work.

The importance of organizational support, or Facilitating Conditions, was also evident. Riris noted that her company actively supports AI use by providing integrated features within Microsoft Teams, such as a real-time translator and automatic meeting summaries, which she found invaluable for facilitating collaboration across different countries. Conversely, Salma's situation highlighted how a lack of organizational support can limit potential. She stated that if her company were to provide access to a premium AI subscription, she would eagerly take full advantage of it and invest the time to learn its advanced features, suggesting that organizational investment can unlock a deeper level of user engagement.

The Overarching Role of Digital Literacy

Finally, a crucial theme that emerged as a moderator for all the preceding factors was the practitioner's own digital literacy. Riris explicitly articulated this, stating that without a sufficient level of digital literacy, an individual simply cannot maximize the potential of AI tools, even with full access. Her comment underscores that effective AI use requires more than just access; it demands a foundational understanding of how to prompt, critique, and strategically apply the technology. Salma's experience offered a practical illustration of a literacy gap; she was unaware of whether the Property Management System (PMS) she used daily (PowerPro) already contained AI features. This gap in awareness prevented her from exploring or utilizing technology that was already at her fingertips. This suggests that digital literacy is the ultimate gatekeeper, determining not only the extent to which a technology is understood but, more importantly, how effectively it is adopted and strategically utilized to its full potential

Interpreting the Findings: A Story of Efficiency, Quality, and Context

The most unequivocal conclusion from the experimental data is that GenAI serves as a powerful accelerator. Across all three distinct marketing tasks long-form content creation, short-form social media development, and visual design students who were prompted to use AI completed their work in dramatically less time, often cutting their completion time by nearly half. This quantitative finding is given powerful, real-world voice by the practitioner interviews. Riris's account of reducing a 3-4 hour proposal

customization task to a fraction of that time perfectly encapsulates the efficiency gains observed in the experiment. Both she and Salma framed AI as a strategic tool for enhancing productivity, confirming that the drive for efficiency is a primary motivator for adoption in the professional sphere.

However, this narrative of efficiency is complicated by the findings on quality, which reveal that the value of GenAI is profoundly task-dependent. For text-based tasks, particularly the long-form blog post, AI appears to be a symbiotic partner, not only increasing speed but also contributing to a modest improvement in output quality. This suggests that for tasks requiring ideation, structuring, and linguistic refinement, GenAI's capabilities align exceptionally well with user needs. For short-form social media content, the impact on quality was negligible, positioning AI as a neutral accelerator a tool for rapid production without inherent creative enhancement or degradation.

The most telling result came from the flyer design task, where the AI-Introduced Group, despite their speed, produced work of a significantly lower quality. This finding, coupled with the observation that only one student in the control group independently turned to AI for thisvisual task, is critical. It suggests a fundamental mismatch between the current capabilities of easily accessible GenAI design tools and the nuanced requirements of effective graphic design. Students, when prompted, may have over-relied on the technology, accepting generic or template-based outputs that lacked the strategic and aesthetic considerations a manual approach would necessitate. This highlights a crucial danger: without the requisite skill in prompting and critical evaluation, efficiency can be achieved at the direct expense of quality.

Situating the Findings within the TTF-UTAUT Framework

The integrated theoretical framework of TTF and UTAUT provides a robust structure for understanding these complex results. The findings strongly validate the centrality of Task-Technology Fit (TTF) in determining not just adoption, but effective utilization. The starkly different quality outcomes of the experiment can be viewed directly through the lens of TTF. For the blog post, there was a high TTF; the technology’s text-generation capabilities were perfectly suited to the task. For the flyer design, there was a low TTF; the technology’s output did not adequately meet the nuanced demands of visual communication, leading to poorer performance. The practitioner interviews reinforce this from the opposite direction: their adoption was *driven* by a high TTF. They sought out and used AI precisely because it offered a superior solution for specific, well-defined tasks like proposal customization and content compilation.

The UTAUT model, in turn, effectively explains the motivations and behaviors behind adoption. Performance Expectancy was a dominant theme across both groups. The students’ widespread use of AI (even in the control group) and the practitioners’ explicit statements confirm their belief that the technology enhances job performance and efficiency. Effort Expectancy was vividly illustrated by the contrast between Salma’s enthusiastic adoption of the "user-friendly" ChatGPT and Riris’s hesitation toward more "advanced" tools with a perceived learning curve. This explains why accessible tools see rapid, organic adoption while more complex systems face

barriers, even if their potential is high. Social Influence and Facilitating Conditions were shown to be important contextual factors, acting as triggers for exploration (Riris's friend recommendations) and enablers of deeper integration (company-provided AI tools).

Crucially, this study proposes an addition to the integrated framework: Digital Literacy as a Key Moderator. The practitioner interviews revealed that literacy is not merely another factor but a prerequisite that governs the successful application of all other constructs. Without a sufficient level of digital literacy the ability to strategically prompt, critically evaluate output, and even be aware of available technological features (as highlighted by Salma's unawareness of her PMS's AI capabilities) the potential benefits suggested by TTF and Performance Expectancy cannot be fully realized. An individual's literacy level dictates whether AI is used as a blunt instrument or a precision tool.

Implications for Theory, Practice, and Pedagogy

The study cautions against a monolithic view of AI, urging managers to assess TTF before integrating tools into workflows. AI is not a universal solution; it is a specialized toolkit. It is exceptionally valuable for text-based content and data analysis but should be applied with caution to nuanced creative and visual design tasks. Furthermore, the findings underscore the urgent need for investment in professional development and upskilling. To truly leverage AI, organizations must cultivate the critical AI literacy of their teams.

For tourism marketing education, the implications are transformative. The high rate of AI use in the control group confirms that prohibition is both futile and counterproductive. The pedagogical imperative must shift from preventing AI use to actively teaching its responsible and strategic application. Curricula must evolve to include "critical AI literacy" as a core competency. Educators should use case studies like the flyer design task to demonstrate the potential pitfalls of over-reliance and to teach students *when* and *how* to use these tools effectively. The goal is not to train students to simply operate AI, but to cultivate their ability to collaborate with it as discerning, critical thinkers who remain the ultimate arbiters of quality and strategy.

Finally, for theory, this study validates the utility of an integrated TTF-UTAUT framework for analyzing GenAI adoption. More importantly, it posits that this framework is incomplete without considering the moderating role of digital literacy. Future research should seek to formally model and test this relationship. Longitudinal studies tracking the evolution of student and practitioner skills over time, as well as research into the efficacy of different pedagogical approaches for teaching AI literacy, represent fertile ground for extending the insights generated here. As AI technology continues its rapid evolution, so too must our understanding of its complex relationship with the humans who seek to harness its power.

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that the integration of GenAI provides significant potential for enhancing tourism marketing practices across both academic and professional contexts. The Pre-Experimental Designs With Intact-Group Comparison Model confirmed that students who employed GenAI achieved higher levels of quality, creativity, and efficiency in completing marketing tasks, underscoring its value as a learning and performance-enhancing tool. Complementing this, insights from practitioner interviews revealed that GenAI has already become a strategic resource in the industry, offering benefits such as content personalization, operational efficiency, and improved customer engagement, while also presenting challenges related to ethical considerations, human oversight, and organizational readiness. By applying the integrated TTF and UTAUT framework, the study highlights the multifaceted factors shaping GenAI adoption, including task alignment, performance expectations, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Taken together, these findings enrich our theoretical understanding and provide practical guidance for tourism educators, marketers, and policymakers, emphasizing the need for a balanced, ethical, and skill-oriented approach to the adoption of GenAI in shaping the future of tourism marketing.

REFERENCES

Acar, O. A. (2024a). Commentary: Reimagining marketing education in the age of generative AI. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *41*(3), 489–495. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2024.06.004

Aldaihani, F. M. F., Islam, M. A., Saatchi, S. G., & Haque, M. A. (2024). Harnessing green purchase intention of generation Z consumers through green marketing strategies. *Business Strategy and Development*, *7*(3). https://doi.org/10.1002/bsd2.419

Blanco-Moreno, S., González-Fernández, A. M., Muñoz-Gallego, P. A., & Egger, R. (2024). What do you do or with whom? Understanding happiness with the tourism experience: an AI approach applied to Instagram. Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, 11(1), 346. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-02859-z

Carvalho, I., & Ivanov, S. (2024). ChatGPT for tourism: applications, benefits and risks. *Tourism Review*, *79*(2), 290–303. https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-02-2023-0088

Celiktutan, B., Klesse, A. K., & Tuk, M. A. (2024a). Acceptability lies in the eye of the beholder: Self-other biases in GenAI collaborations. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *41*(3), 496–512. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2024.05.006

Chang, W., & Park, J. (2024). A comparative study on the effect of ChatGPT recommendation and AI recommender systems on the formation of a

consideration set. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *78*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2024.103743

Chen, Y., Li, C., & Wang, H. (2022). Big Data and Predictive Analytics for Business Intelligence: A Bibliographic Study (2000–2021). Forecasting, 4(4), 767-786. https://doi.org/10.3390/forecast4040042

Dwivedi, Y. K., Kshetri, N., Hughes, L., Slade, E. L., Jeyaraj, A., Kar, A. K., Baabdullah, A. M., Koohang, A., Raghavan, V., Ahuja, M., Albanna, H., Albashrawi, M. A., Al-Busaidi, A. S., Balakrishnan, J., Barlette, Y., Basu, S., Bose, I., Brooks, L., Buhalis, D., ... Wright, R. (2023a). "So what if ChatGPT wrote it?" Multidisciplinary perspectives on opportunities, challenges and implications of generative conversational AI for research, practice and policy. *International Journal of Information Management*, *71*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2023.102642

Erdős, F., Thinakaran, R., Firuza, B., & Koloszár, L. (2025). The rise of ai in tourism - A systematic literature review. Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites, 60(2spl), 1254–1265. https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.602spl22-1498

Giotis, G., & Papadionysiou, E. (2022). The role of managerial and technological innovations in the tourism industry: A review of the empirical literature. Sustainability, 14(9), 5182. https://doi.org/10.3390/su14095182

Goodhue, D. L., & Thompson, R. L. (1995). Task-Technology Fit and Individual Performance. *Source: MIS Quarterly*, *19*(2), 213–236.

Gupta, R., Nair, K., Mishra, M., Ibrahim, B., & Bhardwaj, S. (2024a). Adoption and impacts of generative artificial intelligence: Theoretical underpinnings and research agenda. *International Journal of Information Management Data Insights*, *4*(1). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jjimei.2024.100232

Hocutt, D. L. (2024). Composing with generative AI on digital advertising platforms. *Computers and Composition*, *71*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2024.102829

Iskender, A. (2023). Holy or Unholy? Interview with Open AI's ChatGPT. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, *34*. https://doi.org/10.54055/ejtr.v34i.3169

Islam, T., Miron, A., Nandy, M., Choudrie, J., Liu, X., & Li, Y. (2024). Transforming Digital Marketing with Generative AI. Computers, 13(7). https://doi.org/10.3390/computers13070168

Issakov, Y., Omarov, K., Savanchiyeva, A., Kadyrbekova, D., Aldasheva, A., Beken, A., Tokenova, Z., & Dávid, L. D. (2024a). Determining The Effectiveness Of Using Chatgpt-4 In Organising Excursions. *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites* , *53*(2), 502–513. https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.53213-1225

Leung, X. Y. (2020). Technology-enabled service evolution in tourism: A perspective article. Tourism Review, 75(1), 279–282. https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-06-2019-0229

Li, Y., Wang, S., & Li, Z. (2024). Animating arousal and engagement: Empirical insights from AI-driven tourism performances. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, 15(5), 737–768. https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTT-01-2024-0053

Mogaji, E., Viglia, G., Srivastava, P., & Dwivedi, Y. K. (2024). Is it the end of the technology acceptance model in the era of generative artificial intelligence? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *36*(10), 3324–3339. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-08-2023-1271

Raman, R., Lathabai, H. H., Mandal, S., Das, P., Kaur, T., & Nedungadi, P. (2024). ChatGPT: Literate or intelligent about UN sustainable development goals? *PLoS ONE*, *19*(4 April). https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0297521

Sugiyono. (2013). Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D. Alfabeta, Bandung

Sujood & Pancy (2024). Travelling with open eyes! A study to measure consumers' intention towards experiencing immersive technologies at tourism destinations by using an integrated model of TPB, TAM captured through the lens of S-O-R. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 36(11) 3906–3929. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-11-2023-1771

Tală, M. L., Müller, C. N., Năstase, I. A., State, O., & Gheorghe, G. (2024). Exploring University Students' Perceptions of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education. *Amfiteatru Economic*, *26*(65), 71–88. https://doi.org/10.24818/EA/2024/65/71

Venkatesh, V., Morris, M. G., Davis, G. B., & Davis, F. D. (2003). User Acceptance of Information Technology: Toward a Unified View. In *Source: MIS Quarterly* (Vol. 27, Issue 3

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Dicky Arsyul Salam is a Lecturer at Politeknik Pariwisata NHI Bandung with expertise in tourism, recreation, and marketing. He holds a master's in International Tourism & Hospitality Management from Leeds Beckett University, UK. His research focuses on tourist preferences, service experience design, and the application of generative AI in the tourism industry. He is a Certified Professional Marketer (Asia) and Certified Trainer who has also helped formulate the Indonesian National Competency Standard (SKKNI) for tourism marketing consultancy. Email: dicky@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id. Scholar ID: 2CA2YcEAAAAJ. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7475-437X.

Rifki Rahmanda Putra is a tourism academic based in Bandung Regency, West Java. He has been a lecturer at Politeknik Pariwisata NHI Bandung since 2022. Rifki earned his Bachelor's degree in Resort & Leisure Management from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (2018) and his Master's degree in Sustainable Tourism from Universitas Padjadjaran (2020). In addition to his academic role, he is also a certified Competency Assessor at National Professional Certification Authority (BNSP). Since

2019, he has been actively publishing his research at national and international levels, focusing on sustainable tourism, tourism planning, community-based tourism, tourism destinations, and tourist behavior. Email: Rifki@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id. Scholar ID: nJ2GJNsAAAAJ. ORCID ID: 0000-0003-1982-2613.