



## THE ETHICS OF USING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN TOURISM

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**Abstract:** *The use of digital technologies in tourism has experienced rapid growth in recent years, generating significant benefits in terms of efficiency, quick access to information, and the personalization of services offered to tourists. However, these developments also raise a number of important ethical challenges, particularly related to data protection, algorithmic transparency, and the influence on consumer behavior. This paper aims to analyze the main ethical dimensions associated with the use of digital technologies in tourism through a theoretical approach based on specialized literature. It highlights the risks and ethical dilemmas generated by the collection, storage, and use of data, as well as the responsibility of the stakeholders involved in this process. At the same time, the impact of these technologies on user autonomy and decision-making processes is examined. In addition, the implications for trust in digital tourism services are discussed. In conclusion, the paper outlines directions for a responsible and sustainable use of digital technologies in the tourism sector.*

### • Introduction

The digital transformation of the tourism industry has significantly changed the way tourism services are designed, promoted, and consumed. Online booking platforms, social networks, mobile applications, and artificial intelligence-based technologies have contributed to the development of a digital ecosystem characterized by rapid access to information and the personalization of tourism experiences.

At the same time, the extensive use of personal data and the integration of intelligent algorithms raise important ethical challenges related to data privacy, algorithmic transparency, and the influence on consumer behavior. The development of emerging technologies, such as virtual reality, the metaverse, and service robots, further amplifies these dilemmas and highlights the need for a responsible use of digital technologies in tourism.

This paper aims to analyze the main ethical dimensions associated with the use of digital technologies in tourism, with a focus on data protection, consumer behavior manipulation, and organizational responsibility.



### • Material and method

The research is based on a qualitative and bibliographic approach specific to review studies. The documentation process was carried out through the analysis of specialized literature in the fields of digital tourism, information technology ethics, and artificial intelligence.

Scientific articles, books, and institutional documents published between 2003 and 2025 were analyzed, identified in academic databases such as ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, SpringerLink, and MDPI.

The literature analysis focused on aspects such as:

- the use of digital technologies in tourism;
- the protection and security of personal data;
- the influence on consumer behavior;
- the ethical implications of artificial intelligence;
- the legal framework regarding data protection (GDPR).

### • Results and discussions

The results highlight that digital technologies provide significant benefits for the tourism sector by improving service efficiency, ensuring rapid access to information, and enabling the personalization of tourism experiences. Digital platforms and mobile applications facilitate tourists' decision-making processes and enhance user experience.

At the same time, the literature analysis reveals numerous ethical challenges. The intensive use of personal data raises issues related to privacy, information security, and the lack of user control over personal data. User consent is often formal, while the transparency of data processing remains limited.

Furthermore, artificial intelligence-based systems and recommendation algorithms influence consumer behavior through digital nudging mechanisms. These practices may exceed the limits of recommendation and become forms of manipulation, affecting users' decision-making autonomy.

The research also emphasizes the importance of the legal framework, especially the GDPR, in protecting personal data and promoting the responsible use of digital technologies. However, the rapid pace of technological development requires the continuous adaptation of regulations and the integration of ethical principles into the development process of digital technologies.

### • Conclusions

The digital transformation of tourism generates both significant opportunities and major ethical challenges. Digital technologies contribute to increased efficiency and the personalization of tourism services; however, the extensive use of data and the influence on consumer behavior raise issues related to privacy, transparency, and autonomy.

The study results highlight the need to develop a responsible digital tourism model based on transparency, data protection, and the ethical use of artificial intelligence. Respecting ethical principles and integrating them into the development of digital technologies represent essential conditions for the sustainable development of the tourism sector.

In the future, it is necessary to strengthen collaboration between academia, industry, and decision-makers in order to develop strategies and regulations adapted to the new challenges generated by the digitalization of tourism.

