

Unlocking the potential of TikTok marketing for luxury real estate industry in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Purpose – The study aims to investigate the applicability of TikTok as a social media marketing tool to promote the luxury real estate industry in Sri Lanka based on the technology acceptance model (TAM).

Design/methodology/approach – A quantitative approach was utilized, and data were collected from an online survey of 96 real estate professionals. The sample was selected using the purposive sampling technique. Data analysis was conducted using partial least squares-based structural equation modeling through SmartPLS 4 version to test the hypothesis.

Findings – To achieve the study's purpose, the influence of perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU) and attitude (AT) on professional intention to use TikTok marketing was hypothesized. PU is not supported, indicating that the Sri Lankan luxury real estate sector is not ready to adopt TikTok marketing to promote luxury properties. However, PEOU and AT significantly influence the intention to use TikTok marketing.

Practical implications – This study provides practical implications for real estate managers, marketers and developers. The positive AT of professionals and their perception of TikTok's ease of use indicate its potential for future adoption. However, the rejection of PU suggests that real estate marketers must strategically integrate TikTok into their luxury real estate marketing efforts.

Originality/value – There is a contextual gap in applying the TAM in TikTok marketing adoption in the luxury real estate sector in Asian and Sri Lankan contexts, an area that remains underexplored. It contributes to the literature by examining real estate professionals' adoption of TikTok marketing.

Keywords TikTok, TikTok marketing, Real estate, Luxury real estate, Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Attitude, Professional intention to use, Technology acceptance model

Paper type Research article

1. Introduction

Real estate is one of the primary industries that generates income and supports the economic growth of a country (Tsegaye, 2021). Real estate creates the foundation for families, single people, economies and nations to become wealthy. It is a vital component of social life, a unique means of production and a guarantee of the continued survival and advancement of the



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production process (Hoang Tien, 2022). An important part of the world economy is played by the real estate business, which is a dynamic and diverse sector. In this wider context, the luxury real estate market is a niche that is distinguished by grandeur, style and ideal locations (Hamzah and Sarip, 2017).

Given the nature of real estate, it requires more promotional and attractive marketing techniques than other goods due to imperfect knowledge, especially in Sri Lanka. The use of digital media is particularly beneficial as people of all ages are increasingly addicted to digital platforms. TikTok, a social media platform that has seen rapid growth worldwide, has been used as a social media marketing tool worldwide to promote real properties. TikTok's quick global expansion can be attributed to its unique characteristics, which include short-form content videos with creative components, music filters and other elements (Martini *et al.*, 2022). Nonetheless, research on the use of digital media for real estate marketing in Sri Lanka remains limited, and there is no existing evidence regarding the potential of TikTok in this context. This gap highlights the need for research to explore the effectiveness of TikTok as a marketing tool for the luxury real estate sector in Sri Lanka.

Real estate literature provides insufficient attention to real estate professionals perspectives on social media marketing and provides a primary understanding of consumer perception of social media marketing (Aji *et al.*, 2020; Al-Gasawneh *et al.*, 2023). In the European real estate market, TikTok shows potential for growth as a marketing platform for forward-thinking real estate professionals and forecasts a continued development in the future (Zander, 2021). Further, Barta *et al.* (2023) suggested more research in TikTok marketing to explicitly understand the impact of this tool in different contexts. There are a limited number of studies that have focused on this topic area in the Asian context in general, and especially in the Sri Lankan real estate market. Even though there is a trend of utilizing TikTok in Asia and the Sri Lankan real estate context, it is mostly used for humorous content created by individuals rather than as a strategic marketing tool. This indicates a lack of awareness about the potential value of short video content for marketing purposes, suggesting that the region is still in its infancy in this regard. In the context of the Sri Lankan luxury real estate market, which is characterized by high-end properties with premium facilities and utilities, there is inadequate information on the professional perspective (Roy *et al.*, 2018). This underscores the need for research to explore how professionals view TikTok as a marketing tool within the broader real estate market in Sri Lanka.

Although various technology acceptance models (TAMs) exist in previous studies, this study adopts TAM because of its well-established effectiveness in explaining individual technology adoption behavior (Davis *et al.*, 1989; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2003). Given that this research is in its initial stage, TAM offers a structured yet simple approach to understanding key adoption factors such as perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU) and attitude (AT) (Legris *et al.*, 2003; Rauniar *et al.*, 2014). The limited adoption of the TAM in the luxury real estate sector further enhances the originality of this research study. Accordingly, this research aims to study the applicability of TikTok marketing to promote the luxury real estate sector in Sri Lanka. The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the knowledge of the application of TikTok marketing in the Asian and Sri Lankan luxury real estate industry. The study investigates professionals' opinions and adoption of TikTok using the TAM, providing insightful information for marketers and decision-makers in the luxury real estate sector.

2. Literature review

2.1 TikTok marketing in digital context

TikTok is a rapidly growing social media platform globally. This platform allows the creation of attractive videos with filters, music and creative features. Generation Z and millennials are the majority of the users of this platform. Nearly four years after its launch, TikTok is experiencing a boom in popularity (Martini *et al.*, 2022). TikTok is a dynamic audiovisual tool

that allows users to publish only short videos, which can be modified or altered using tools supplied by the platform. As a result, TikTok is more focused on fun and passing the time than Twitter and Facebook, which are more concerned with information, news and contacts with acquaintances. TikTok is especially popular with teenagers and the young as a social media platform mainly used for entertainment purposes (Haenlein *et al.*, 2020).

Influencing marketing plays a new marketing role in the present marketing world. Instagram and TikTok play significant roles there (Haenlein *et al.*, 2020). Barta *et al.* (2023) investigated the effectiveness of influencer marketing on TikTok and concluded that uniqueness and humor improve message efficacy and recommended additional research to better understand this phenomenon. Previous researchers have done studies in different contexts, such as in the sport context, to understand how athletes use TikTok for branding (Su *et al.*, 2020); in the educational context, Akbari *et al.* (2022) determined whether TikTok has lasting benefits on higher education promotion, and Martini *et al.* (2022) found that TikTok can be utilized as a successful promotional medium for promoting culinary products. In general, the TikTok application is considered one of the most popular and widely used apps among the younger generation (Jane Araujo *et al.*, 2022). It has been discovered that TikTok video advertising emotive, amusing and instructional elements, have a favorable impact on customer behavior. Considering the real estate sector, TikTok-related studies seem significantly inadequate. A few research studies have been conducted in this context (Zander, 2021).

2.2 *Luxury real estate*

Luxury real estate represents a niche segment characterized by exclusivity, premium pricing, superior quality and symbolic value (Roy *et al.*, 2018; Yu, 2023). Unlike mass-market real estate, luxury properties are marketed not only based on functional attributes but also on emotional, aspirational and lifestyle-oriented dimensions. Consequently, marketing strategies in this sector must carefully balance visibility with exclusivity. The demand for luxury real estate is shaped by several factors, including the financial capacity of potential buyers, the attractiveness of the location and the prevailing market conditions (Fitzgerald, 2023; Golob *et al.*, 2012). The perception of luxury and the desire for luxury consumption play a significant role in shaping the demand for luxury real estate (Gupta and Zaghdoudi, 2016). The marketing of luxury real estate involves targeting high-net-worth individuals and leveraging the exclusivity and desirability of the properties (Aliyev *et al.*, 2019). Understanding the motivations for luxury consumption, as well as the psychological behavior of luxury consumers, is essential for developing effective marketing strategies for luxury real estate (Gupta and Zaghdoudi, 2016). Luxury brands rely heavily on exclusivity, rarity and symbolic value, which must be carefully preserved even when using digital platforms (Kapferer, 2009). Recent research also emphasizes that digital and social media can offer opportunities for storytelling and global reach, but they must be managed strategically to avoid reducing luxury brand prestige in real estate (Aliyev *et al.*, 2019).

In the context of the Sri Lankan luxury real estate market, an analysis is conducted concerning the intention to purchase houses. Typically, properties are marketed through face-to-face consultations and recommendations that are provided by experts and users in Sri Lanka (Karunaratne and Ariyawansa, 2015).

2.3 *Technology acceptance model (TAM) and theoretical contribution*

The TAM, developed by Davis (1989), is a foundational framework for understanding user acceptance and adoption of new technologies. This is derived from the theory of reasoned action (TRA). TAM explains how individuals' behavioral intentions to adopt technology are influenced by key perceptual factors (Rauniar *et al.*, 2014). There are five key variables in this model, including PU, PEOU, AT toward use, intention to use and actual use (Raj *et al.*, 2023).

Subsequent extensions, including TAM2 and TAM3, incorporate additional determinants such as social influence, cognitive processes and user-specific factors [Venkatesh and Bala \(2008\)](#). Theoretical models such as TAM, TAM 2 and TAM 3 have been the subject of scientific inquiry by a variety of researchers ([Jain et al., 2022](#)). TAM3 is introduced by [Venkatesh and Bala \(2008\)](#), which further refines the model by integrating factors related to PEOU, including computer self-efficacy, perceptions of external control and computer anxiety. These developments enhance our understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing technology acceptance. Although TAM has evolved through several extensions, recent studies indicate that the original model continues to demonstrate strong explanatory capability and conceptual simplicity, particularly in exploratory contexts where theoretical clarity is essential ([Chatterjee et al., 2021](#); [Dwivedi et al., 2023](#)).

Previous studies have demonstrated to explore individual adoption and usage of new information technology (IT), adoption of technical systems, Facebook social media usage and the adoption of e-commerce ([Chen et al., 2011](#); [Jan and Contreras, 2011](#); [Nguyen and Barrett, 2006](#); [Rauniar et al., 2014](#)). The TAM model is intention-based and estimates usage based on behavioral intention. TAM has been employed in a multitude of research studies across various industries, such as mobile applications adopted for the healthcare industry ([Abu-Dalbouh, 2013](#)), IT, information systems, human-computer interaction ([Zubeyir and Uslu, 2023](#)) and the digital marketing field ([Muhammad Ismail et al., 2021](#); [Susanti and Astuti, 2020](#)). Recent empirical evidence further supports that PU and PEOU significantly influence behavioral intention in contemporary digital environments ([Liu et al., 2022](#); [Raj et al., 2023](#)).

Within the real estate sector, TAM has been applied to study the adoption of digital tools such as property management systems, augmented reality and smart real estate technologies ([Elshafey et al., 2020](#); [Siwale, 2022](#); [Ullah et al., 2019](#)). However, limited research has examined the applicability of TAM in understanding the adoption of social media marketing tools, particularly TikTok, within the luxury real estate sector.

3. Conceptual framework and hypothesis development

This study employed the TAM to systematically evaluate and analyze the variables that influence real estate professionals' adoption and use of TikTok marketing in Sri Lanka. Specifically, we focused on PU, PEOU and AT towards behavioral intention, which are core variables in the original TAM framework ([Figure 1](#) illustrates the research framework). In this study, we extend traditional TAM by positioning AT as an independent variable rather than a mediating factor, as originally proposed by [Davis \(1989\)](#). According to the [Teo \(2009\)](#), it aligned with this research model and demonstrated that AT significantly impacts behavioral intention, supporting its role as a direct predictor rather than a mediator in the TAM framework. Based on the previous studies, these variables were selected and applied TAM in the real estate marketing context based on their proven relevance in prior research across various contexts ([Chatterjee et al., 2021](#); [Chen et al., 2011](#); [Dwivedi et al., 2023](#); [Jan and](#)

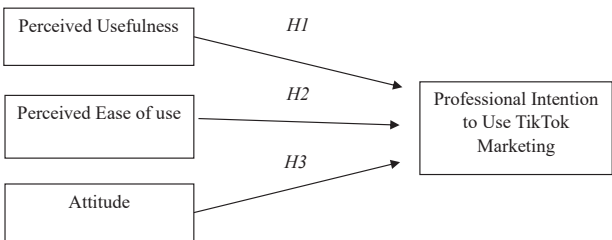


Figure 1. Research framework. Source: [Davis \(1989\)](#)

Contreras, 2011; Liu *et al.*, 2022; Nguyen and Barrett, 2006; Raj *et al.*, 2023; Rauniar *et al.*, 2014) including real estate (Elshafey *et al.*, 2020; Ullah *et al.*, 2019).

3.1 Perceived usefulness

PU is defined as the person's belief that the system can enhance the person's job performance (Davis, 1989). Taufiq *et al.* (2019) mentioned that PU is a key determinant of behavioral intentions, indicating that individuals are more likely to adopt technology when they perceive it as beneficial to their tasks or objectives. Previous studies pointed out the usefulness as an important determinant of system use. PU has a significant correlation with behavioral intention and has been mentioned in several recent studies (Husin *et al.*, 2022; Liu *et al.*, 2022; Susanti and Astuti, 2020; Tommasetti *et al.*, 2018). For example, Camilleri and Falzon (2021) and Susanti and Astuti (2020) found a significant and positive impact of PU on the intention to use digital technologies. Further, Susanti and Astuti (2020) justified that PU can be used as an independent variable of the intention to use TikTok marketing. Recent studies further confirm that PU remains a critical predictor of behavioral intention in social media and digital platform adoption, particularly in professional and marketing contexts (Nuryyev *et al.*, 2020; Somnath Hadalgekar and Desai, 2025). Thus, this study hypothesizes that:

- H1. Perceived usefulness has a significant influence on professional intention to use TikTok marketing.

3.2 Perceived ease of use

PEOU is defined as the degree to which a user adopts a target system free of effort (Davis, 1989). This definition considers the user's perception of the effort needed to use technology, which is crucial in predicting acceptance of new technologies (Alshurideh *et al.*, 2021; Lisana, 2020; Williams, 2021). When consumers perceive a technology as both useful and easy to use, they are more likely to show an intention to adopt and utilize it. This behavior also determines the future of the product or service offered through that specific technology or platform. According to Nistor (2019), PEOU plays a crucial function as an early determinant of system adoption and usage by having a direct and positive impact on users' intention to adopt technology. Furthermore, in the context of technology adoption, Palaniswamy and Raj (2022) emphasized the noteworthy positive influence of PEOU on users' behavioral intentions. More recent empirical evidence indicates that PEOU significantly enhances user engagement and adoption intentions in emerging social media platforms, particularly where intuitive interfaces and ease of content creation are critical (Chatterjee *et al.*, 2021; Sohn and Kwon, 2020; Somnath Hadalgekar and Desai, 2025). Taken together, these findings support the hypothesis that professionals' intention to adopt TikTok marketing in the luxury real estate industry is influenced by PEOU. Accordingly, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

- H2. Perceived ease of use has a significant influence on professional intention to use TikTok marketing.

3.3 Attitude

AT is a positive or negative evaluation, and it evaluates the intention and behavior (Davis, 1989). This variable has been evaluated through various theories on the adoption of IT, such as the TRA and the TAM (Flavian *et al.*, 2020). Previous researchers have identified the reasons why people tend to have particular behavioral intentions. A lot of scholars pointed out that there was a close relationship or correlation between people's behavioral intention and their ATs (Kaur and Thakur, 2019; Tommasetti *et al.*, 2018). Kaur and Thakur (2019) tested the AT of online shopping, and it resulted in a positive relationship. It is understood that behavioral intention to use technology is greatly influenced by AT (Jan and Contreras, 2011; Taufiq *et al.*,

2019). Recent studies further highlight that a favorable AT toward digital platforms plays a critical role in shaping behavioral intention, particularly in social media and digital marketing environments where perceptions of relevance and credibility are essential (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2023; Nuryyev *et al.*, 2020) Thus, this study hypothesized that:

H3. Attitude has a significant influence on professional intention to use TikTok marketing.

4. Methodology

This study adopts a deductive research approach within a quantitative methodology, guided by the TAM as the underlying theoretical framework. A deductive approach is appropriate as the study begins with established theories and hypotheses derived from TAM and tests them empirically using observed data from real estate professionals. The quantitative design is employed because it enables the measurement of relationships between variables such as PU, PEOU, AT and professional intention to use TikTok (PIUT) and allows for statistical testing of the proposed hypotheses to determine the strength and significance of these relationships. This approach is consistent with prior TAM-based studies, which commonly utilize structured surveys and quantitative analysis to examine technology adoption behavior in professional and organizational contexts (Legris *et al.*, 2003; Rauniar *et al.*, 2014; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2003).

4.1 Measures

The survey instrument was developed based on the existing TAM literature. The survey items were taken as per Table 1. The 17 items in the survey were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

4.2 Population and sample

The population of this study is likely to be real estate professionals working in the marketing and sales divisions of luxury real estate companies in Sri Lanka. The sample included real estate professionals working in marketing and sales divisions at luxury real estate companies in Sri Lanka.

4.3 Sampling technique and sample size

The study employed a purposive sampling approach, a non-probability sampling technique. This means that researchers deliberately selected participants based on specific criteria to ensure they met the research objectives. In this case, the sample was 96 real estate professionals working in the marketing and sales divisions at luxury real estate companies in Sri Lanka. The sample size is considered adequate based on G power analysis (requiring 77) and the 10-time rule of partial least squares-based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis (requiring 40) (Hair *et al.*, 2011).

4.4 Data collection and data analysis technique

The study utilized a structured questionnaire to collect data from a sample of 96 real estate professionals and used PLS-SEM using SmartPLS 4 version for data analysis.

5. Data analysis and results

5.1 Demographic and descriptive results

Respondent's demographic results are presented in Table 2. As shown in the demographic profile (Table 2), a total of 96 professionals from the marketing and sales divisions of luxury real estate companies participated in the study. Table 2 indicates that 47% were male and 53% were female respondents. The majority of respondents were at the middle level (57%), while

Table 1. Variables and constructors

Variable	Variable items	Sources
PU	PU1-TikTok marketing will improve our firm performance PU2-TikTok marketing will increase firm productivity PU3-TikTok marketing could make it easier to promote our products PU4-TikTok marketing will enhance the effectiveness of marketing PU5-I find TikTok marketing is useful	Taufiq et al. (2019)
PEOU	PEOU1-I find TikTok marketing is easy to use PEOU2-Learning how to use the TikTok marketing is easy for me PEOU3-It is easy to become skillful in marketing using TikTok PEOU4-My interaction with TikTok marketing is clear PEOU5-My interaction with TikTok marketing is understandable PEOU6-It will be easy to find property information through TikTok marketing	Taufiq et al. (2019)
AT	AT1-I believe that using TikTok Marketing is a good idea AT2-I like to use TikTok Marketing in our company AT3-It is a pleasure for me to use TikTok as a new social media marketing tool	Wu and Chen (2017)
PIUT	PIUT1-I like to voluntarily use the TikTok marketing for our company in the near future PIUT2-I would make full use of TikTok marketing to create real estate content if I obtained it PIUT3-I shall spend money on TikTok marketing to access the locations and promote the properties	Camilleri and Falzon (2021) , Liu et al. (2022)

Source(s): Authors (2024)

14% were at the top level and 29% were at the low level, offering insights across hierarchical ranks. Among the respondents, 58% had less than 5 years of experience, 27% had 5–10 years and 15% had more than 15 years, providing a wide range of experiences. The study focused on real estate marketing professionals (47%), company heads and specialists (30%) and sales divisions (23%), ensuring representation from different departments.

Overall, the demographic analysis shows a balanced sample in terms of gender, managerial level, work experience and job designations, enhancing the representativeness of the research findings.

5.2 Measurement model

The first step in evaluating the reflective measurement model is to analyze the indicator loadings. It is recommended to aim for outer loadings greater than 0.7, as this indicates that the construct explains more than 0.5 of the indicator's variance, leading to acceptable item reliability ([Hair et al., 2014](#)) (refer to [Table 3](#)).

The internal reliability of the measures employed in this study was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, which is more than 0.7 ([Hair et al., 2021](#)), indicating that all the constructs in the model have good internal consistency (refer to [Table 3](#)).

The composite reliability (CR) and outer loadings above the minimum threshold value of 0.6, and CR values in [Table 3](#) indicate that each construct has high internal consistency and reliability levels ([Hair et al., 2014](#)). The average variance extracted (AVE) was calculated to

Table 2. Demographic analysis

Demographics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	45	47
	Female	51	53
Managerial levels	Top	13	14
	Middle	55	57
	Low	28	29
Working experience	less than 5	56	58
	5–10 Years	26	27
	10–15 Years	12	13
	More than 15 years	2	2
Job designations	Marketing related jobs	45	47
	Sales related jobs	22	23
	Other	29	30
Total respondents		96	
Source(s): Authors (2024)			

Table 3. Results of the measurement model

Variables		Outer loadings values	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Attitude	AT 1	0.909	0.877	0.884	0.802
	AT 2	0.916			
	AT 3	0.861			
Perceived ease of use	PEOU 1	0.857	0.903	0.906	0.678
	PEOU 2	0.871			
	PEOU 3	0.824			
	PEOU 4	0.833			
	PEOU 5	0.853			
	PEOU 6	0.686			
Professional intention to use TikTok	PIUT 1	0.778	0.814	0.845	0.728
	PIUT 2	0.907			
	PIUT 3	0.868			
Perceived usefulness	PU 1	0.902	0.929	0.938	0.778
	PU 2	0.879			
	PU 3	0.868			
	PU 4	0.901			
	PU 5	0.859			
Source(s): Authors (2024)					

determine the convergent validity. The AVE values are higher than the required minimum threshold of 0.5, providing evidence that all constructs have convergent validity (Hair *et al.*, 2014) (Refer to Table 3).

Under the model validity assessment, discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The threshold limits of the discriminant validity should be 0.65 and 0.85. To meet this criterion, all the AVE values of the structural model should not surpass (Henseler *et al.*, 2015). The findings displayed in Table 4 confirmed that the values meet the threshold level.

Table 4. Fornell–Larcker criterion test values

	AT	PEOU	PIUT	PU
AT	0.896			
PEOU	0.755	0.823		
PIUT	0.702	0.710	0.853	
PU	0.714	0.821	0.649	0.882

Source(s): Authors (2024)

5.3 Structural model

Since the reliability and validity have been confirmed, this section discusses the structural model. The model fitness of the study indicates R^2 value is 0.571, which means moderately high predictive power. Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) score of less than 0.08 is regarded as an excellent model fit (Hair *et al.*, 2014), and the study indicates a 0.067 SRMR value (refer to Table 5).

Figure 2 shows the relationships between different constructs and the results of the PLS-SEM algorithm, and the path coefficients employing bootstrapping SmartPLS are indicated in Table 6. Bootstrapping is a technique that involves drawing a large subsample (5,000) with replacement from the original sample to calculate accurate T-values for testing the significance of structural paths (Hair *et al.*, 2011).

The findings of this investigation, as presented in Table 6, revealed that the relationship between PU and PIUT has no significant influence ($\beta = 0.095$), where the p -value of the relationship is greater than 0.05. Therefore, H1 was rejected. However, PEOU had a significant influence on PIUT ($\beta = 0.356$), the p -value was less than 0.05 and H2 was accepted. AT has a significant influence on PIUT ($\beta = 0.365$), considering that the p -value was less than 0.05; thus, H3 was accepted.

6. Discussion

6.1 Perceived usefulness and intention to Use TikTok (H1)

Referring to hypothesis 1 (H1), the results reveal that PU does not have a significant influence on PIUT in the Sri Lankan luxury real estate context. PU is defined as the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system will enhance job performance (Davis *et al.*, 1989). Within the TAM, it is widely regarded as one of the strongest predictors of behavioral intention, as individuals are more likely to adopt technologies they perceive as beneficial to their tasks or objectives (Taufiq *et al.*, 2019). Empirical evidence from prior studies consistently supports this relationship, demonstrating a significant positive impact of PU on behavioral intention in various digital adoption contexts, including social media and marketing technologies (Camilleri and Falzon, 2021; Husin *et al.*, 2022; Liu *et al.*, 2022; Susanti and Astuti, 2020; Tommasetti *et al.*, 2018). In particular, research has identified PU as a key determinant of intention to use TikTok marketing in professional settings (Susanti and Astuti,

Table 5. Model fitness summary

R-square	R-square 0.571	R-square adjusted 0.557
SRMR	Saturated model 0.067	Estimated model 0.067

Source(s): Authors (2024)

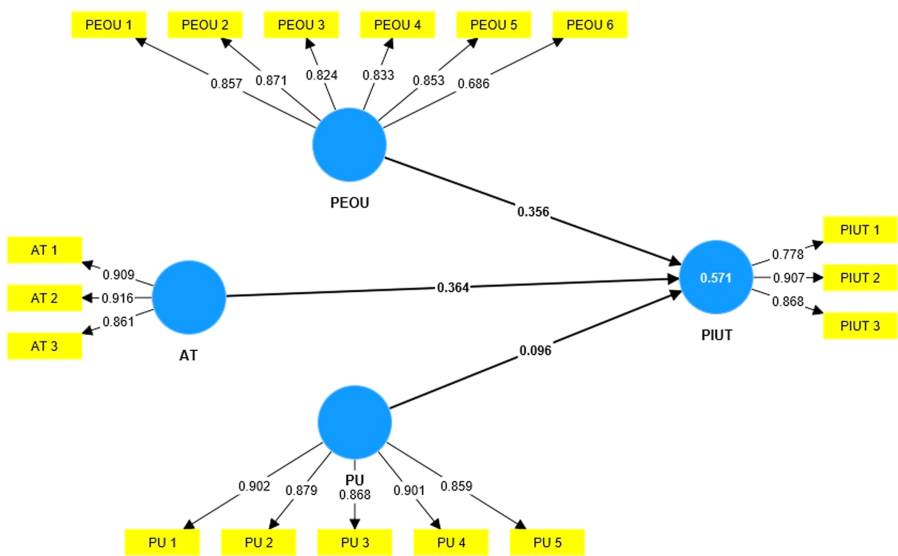


Figure 2. Structural model. Source: Authors (2024)

Table 6. Path coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/ STDEV)	p values	Decision
H1: PU → PIUT	0.095	0.101	0.125	0.765	0.444	Not supported
H2: PEOU → PIUT	0.356	0.359	0.139	2.560	0.010	Supported
H3: AT → PIUT	0.365	0.362	0.094	3.864	0.000	Supported

Source(s): Authors (2024)

2020), while recent studies further confirm its relevance in shaping digital platform adoption behavior in marketing environments (Nuryyev *et al.*, 2020; Somnath Hadalgekar and Desai, 2025).

However, the findings of this study contradict these established relationships, as PU was found to be statistically insignificant in influencing intention. This result is consistent with earlier studies that question the universality of PU as a direct predictor of behavioral intention, particularly in evolving technology contexts (Taylor and Todd, 1995; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2003). Additionally, Agarwal and Karahanna (2000) suggest that experiential factors and cognitive absorption may override functional usefulness perceptions in determining technology adoption behavior.

In the Sri Lankan luxury real estate context, this finding can be explained by the limited positioning of TikTok as a professional tool, as it is largely perceived as an entertainment-based platform rather than a serious marketing channel. Furthermore, the sector continues to rely heavily on traditional interpersonal selling methods and referral-based transactions (Karunarathne and Ariyawansa, 2015). This reduces the perceived strategic value of emerging digital platforms. Accordingly, the rejection of H1 indicates that professionals currently do not

associate TikTok with tangible performance benefits in luxury real estate marketing, reflecting an early stage of digital transformation within the industry.

6.2 Perceived ease of use and intention to use TikTok (H2)

The results of this study indicate that PEOU has a significant positive influence on PIUT in the luxury real estate sector in Sri Lanka, consistent with the TAM, which defines PEOU as “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort” (Davis, 1989). The findings suggest that real estate professionals perceive TikTok as a user-friendly platform that requires minimal effort to operate and that it can be easily integrated into existing professional marketing practices within the luxury real estate domain. This aligns with prior research, which demonstrates that PEOU is a critical determinant of technology adoption, particularly in digital and social media environments where simplicity and usability strongly influence behavioral intention (Jan and Contreras, 2011; Taufiq *et al.*, 2019). In addition, studies on social media platforms highlight that TikTok, in particular, is designed with intuitive navigation and content creation features that reduce technical barriers, thereby encouraging adoption among professional users (Martini *et al.*, 2022). In this study context, such usability characteristics appear to be especially important, as they enable professionals to perceive TikTok not as a complex technological tool but as an accessible and practical marketing channel. Accordingly, the results imply that ease of use functions as a key facilitating factor in shaping adoption intention, reinforcing the view that in emerging digital marketing environments, simplicity and accessibility can significantly accelerate technology acceptance even within traditionally conservative sectors such as luxury real estate.

6.3 Attitude and intention to use TikTok (H3)

The results of this study confirm that AT has a significant positive influence on PIUT marketing in the luxury real estate sector in Sri Lanka, consistent with the theoretical foundations of the TRA and the TAM, which position AT as a central determinant of behavioral intention (Davis, 1989; Flavian *et al.*, 2020). AT refers to an individual’s overall positive or negative evaluation of performing a behavior, which subsequently shapes intention and actual usage behavior. Prior research has consistently demonstrated that favorable ATs significantly enhance behavioral intention across various digital adoption contexts, including online shopping and technology-enabled services (Kaur and Thakur, 2019; Tommasetti *et al.*, 2018), while more recent studies further emphasize that in social media and digital marketing environments, AT becomes increasingly influential due to perceptions of relevance, engagement and credibility of the platform (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2023; Jan and Contreras, 2011; Nuryyev *et al.*, 2020; Taufiq *et al.*, 2019). In the present study, professionals in the Sri Lankan luxury real estate sector exhibit a favorable AT towards adopting TikTok as a marketing tool, indicating openness to digital transformation despite the earlier finding that PU is not significant. This suggests that affective and perceptual evaluations may currently outweigh functional utility considerations in shaping behavioral intention, reflecting a transitional stage of technology adoption in which positive sentiment toward emerging platforms precedes clear recognition of their direct business value.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to investigate the applicability of TikTok marketing in promoting luxury real estate in Sri Lanka, with a specific focus on understanding the factors influencing its adoption among industry professionals. Compared to the rapid growth of TikTok popularity, the real estate sector in Sri Lanka has been slow to adopt this social media for marketing purposes. This study raised the question of why TikTok marketing is not being effectively leveraged to promote luxury real estate properties and enhance sales in this arena. By utilizing TAM, the study aims to explore variables such as PU, PEOU, AT and intention to

use TikTok for marketing purposes. To attain the objectives of this study, a quantitative approach and purposive sampling were utilized. Then, the data were analyzed using structural equation modeling to understand the impact of variables on the intention to use TikTok marketing.

This study contributes towards addressing the knowledge and contextual gap pertaining to the adoption of TikTok marketing within the luxury real estate sector in Sri Lankan and Asian contexts through the incorporation of TAM. The PU of TikTok as a marketing tool is not supported within this research, emphasizing the limited application of the tool in the luxury real estate domain, yet highlighting the possibility of adopting it in the future, with acceptance of ease of use and positive ATs of real estate professionals.

8. Practical implications

This study offers significant practical implications for real estate managers, real estate marketers and luxury real estate developers to optimize their marketing strategies. The findings indicate that PU is not supported in the Sri Lankan context for real estate marketing (Haenlein *et al.*, 2020). Sectors like the luxury real estate sector are specific markets that mainly use face-to-face interaction for their market, and it is the market that is using marketing strategies carefully. The rejection of PU, PEOU and AT will give a hint for future adoption of TikTok marketing in the luxury real estate sector. Because of the PU, real estate marketers need to carefully adopt TikTok to their marketing strategies in the near future. This positive AT can be used by real estate managers to investigate original marketing concepts on TikTok. Another critical implication is the mismatch between TikTok's dominant perception as an entertainment platform in Sri Lanka and its potential role in luxury branding. This means that real estate professionals must carefully design content that maintains exclusivity and prestige while still engaging audiences through TikTok's interactive and creative features.

9. Future research directions

This research does not directly investigate buyer adoption. Future studies could explore the customer perspective to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of TikTok marketing in real estate. Future researchers could address these limitations and further advance the understanding of TikTok marketing in the luxury real estate sector by employing a mixed-methods approach to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing TikTok adoption among real estate professionals. Additionally, exploring the applicability of findings to other real estate market categories, such as commercial or mid-range properties, could yield valuable insights into the broader impact of TikTok marketing strategies. Further, expanding the geographic focus and incorporating diverse perspectives from stakeholders such as influencers, buyers and developers would enrich future research and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of TikTok in real estate marketing. Addressing these avenues for future research can contribute to bridging existing gaps in knowledge and informing strategic decision-making within the real estate industry.

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