Case Study: Rethinking Airbnb – A Data-Driven Path to Profitability

"In a city that never sleeps, the smartest minds must help Airbnb find where it wakes up stronger."

Background:

Airbnb, Inc., a global pioneer in community-based travel, revolutionized the short-term rental and hospitality sector. Launched in 2008 in San Francisco, Airbnb connects hosts offering homestays and experiences with travellers worldwide. Its peer-to-peer model allows people to monetize extra space while offering guests more personalized and often more affordable stays.

Despite growing listings and user engagement, **Airbnb continues to face challenges in profitability**, market regulation, inconsistent listing quality, host churn, and fluctuating guest satisfaction. This presents an opportunity to examine platform-level inefficiencies, underperformance by segment or region, and customer feedback to design a better strategy.

Objective:

This case study presents a curated dataset of Airbnb's listing activity across **New York City**, allowing participants to deep-dive into geographic, behavioural, and performance analytics. The goal is to identify revenue inefficiencies, guest pain points, and host engagement issues, then propose **data-driven strategies** to improve **Airbnb's profitability and user satisfaction**.

Participants are encouraged to take a holistic business analyst's approach, combining **dishoarding, pattern detection, and business strategy** – to support Airbnb's global expansion and sustainable profitability.

Strategic Focus Areas:

- Identify **underperforming locations or listing types** based on price, rating, and reviews.

- Predict **listing churn** or guest dissatisfaction using review and availability patterns.

- Recommend **platform improvements** for better host and guest engagement.

- Suggest **pricing, marketing, or product strategies** to increase profitability.