iJRASET
International Journal For Research in
Applied Science and Engineering Technology

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH
IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 14 Issue: IV Month of publication: April 2026

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2026.78883

International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 14 Issue IV Apr 2026- Available at www.ijraset.com

Intelligent Rental Valuation: A Full-Stack Approach to Multi-Modal Property Price Prediction Using Machine Learning and Deep Learning

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Abstract: The rapid expansion of digital property rental platforms has intensified the challenge of determining fair and competitive rental prices in highly dynamic markets. Property rental prices are influenced by a combination of structural attributes, geographical location, rental duration, and latent market demand, making manual pricing strategies unreliable and inconsistent. This research presents an intelligent, full-stack rental valuation system that integrates Machine Learning (ML) and Deep Learning (DL) models into a real-world property rental platform to deliver accurate, transparent, and scalable price predictions.

The proposed system introduces a three-tier price prediction framework:

manual feature-based prediction, where users provide explicit property attributes;

geospatial map-based prediction, leveraging Google Maps integration to extract latitude and longitude for location-aware pricing; and CSV-based batch prediction, enabling bulk rental valuation for large property datasets. Ensemble regression models including Random Forest and XGBoost are evaluated alongside a deep neural network architecture to capture nonlinear relationships between property features and rental prices across daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly time horizons.

Experimental evaluation using real-world rental datasets demonstrates that ensemble ML models achieve strong predictive performance in moderate data regimes, while DL models offer improved generalization as data volume increases. The best-performing model achieved an R^2 score exceeding 0.90 with low Mean Absolute Error (MAE). The results validate the feasibility of deploying ML/DL-driven pricing intelligence within a live full-stack environment, contributing to fair pricing, reduced information asymmetry, and improved decision-making for both hosts and guests.

Keywords: Rental Price Prediction, Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Full-Stack Systems, Geospatial Modeling, Smart Real Estate

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital platforms have fundamentally transformed the residential rental ecosystem by enabling seamless interaction between property owners and tenants. Platforms supporting short-term and long-term rentals—ranging from daily stays to annual leases—have created new economic opportunities but also introduced pricing complexity. Rental price determination is no longer a static task; it depends on property characteristics, location desirability, rental duration, and market trends.

In practice, most property owners rely on manual comparisons with nearby listings or subjective intuition to set rental prices. Such approaches often lead to overpricing, which increases vacancy periods, or underpricing, which reduces long-term revenue. From the tenant's perspective, a lack of transparent and data-driven pricing mechanisms reduces trust and market efficiency.

Machine Learning (ML) and Deep Learning (DL) techniques provide a principled approach to rental price estimation by learning patterns from historical and contextual data. However, existing research predominantly evaluates predictive accuracy in offline environments and does not address deployment challenges such as user interaction, geospatial input, and scalability.

This research focuses on the design and implementation of a full-stack rental price prediction system integrated into a live property rental platform. The objectives of this study are:

1) To develop a multi-modal rental price prediction framework supporting manual, map-based, and batch inputs.
2) To evaluate the performance of ML and DL models across different rental durations.
3) To demonstrate practical deployment of predictive models within a real-world web application.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Accurate rental price estimation has been an active research topic within real estate analytics, driven by the growing availability ofdigital housing data and advances in machine learning. Prior studies can be broadly categorized into traditional econometric approaches, machine learning–based models, deep learning methods, and recent attempts to incorporate spatial intelligence.

A. Traditional Econometric and Hedonic Models

Early research on property and rental valuation primarily relied on hedonic pricing theory, where rental price is expressed as a linear combination of observable property attributes such as size, number of rooms, and location indicators. These models offered interpretability and statistical grounding; however, they assumed linear and additive relationships among features. Empirical studies have shown that such assumptions often fail to capture complex market dynamics, particularly in heterogeneous urban rental markets. As a result, hedonic regression models tend to underperform when applied to diverse property categories and rapidly changing demand conditions.

B. Machine Learning Approaches for Rental Price Prediction

To overcome the limitations of linear models, researchers increasingly adopted machine learning techniques capable of modeling nonlinear feature interactions. Decision Trees and Random Forest regressors demonstrated improved robustness by capturing hierarchical decision boundaries without strict parametric assumptions. Multiple comparative studies report that Random Forest models significantly reduce prediction error compared to linear regression, particularly when property attributes exhibit multicollinearity.

Gradient Boosting methods further advanced prediction accuracy by sequentially correcting residual errors of weak learners. XGBoost, in particular, has been widely reported as a high-performing algorithm for housing and rental price estimation due to its regularization mechanisms, scalability, and ability to handle sparse features. Empirical evaluations consistently show XGBoost outperforming standalone tree-based and linear models across metrics such as MAE and RMSE. However, these studies typically focus on offline experimentation and do not address real-time inference constraints or system integration.

C. Deep Learning in Real Estate Valuation

Deep learning techniques, especially Artificial Neural Networks (ANNs), have been explored to model complex, high-dimensional relationships in real estate data. Prior research indicates that neural networks can outperform traditional ML models when large and diverse datasets are available. Nevertheless, deep models often require careful tuning, substantial computational resources, and robust regularization strategies to avoid overfitting. Moreover, several studies note that deep learning models provide limited interpretability, which can hinder trust and adoption in pricing-sensitive applications such as rental platforms.

D. Role of Spatial and Geospatial Features

Location has consistently been identified as one of the most influential determinants of rental price. Earlier works commonly represented location using categorical identifiers such as city or postal codes. More recent studies incorporate latitude and longitude as continuous variables, enabling finer-grained spatial modeling. Some research applies distance-based features to capture proximity to points of interest, transportation hubs, or central business districts, reporting notable improvements in predictive performance.

Despite these advancements, most existing approaches treat spatial data as static numerical inputs and do not provide interactive mechanisms for user-driven location selection. Furthermore, few studies explicitly evaluate how real-time geospatial interaction can be integrated into deployed pricing systems.

E. Research Gap and Contribution

Although prior literature demonstrates the effectiveness of machine learning and deep learning models for rental price prediction, several gaps remain. First, the majority of studies are confined to offline evaluation and do not consider full-stack deployment challenges. Second, existing research rarely supports multiple input modalities, such as manual entry, map-based interaction, and batch processing within a unified system. Third, limited attention has been given to scalability and usability for real-world stakeholders.

This research addresses these gaps by presenting a multi-modal, full-stack rental price prediction framework that integrates ensemble ML models and deep learning with interactive geospatial input and scalable batch inference. By embedding predictive intelligence directly into a live rental platform, the proposed approach advances both the technical and practical dimensions of rental price estimation.

III. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

This section details the end-to-end methodological pipeline adopted for rental price prediction, emphasizing mathematical formulation, geospatial reasoning, and scalable batch inference. The design adheres to IMRaD standards and is validated within a deployed full-stack environment.

A. Problem Formulation

Rental price estimation is modeled as a supervised regression task. Given a feature vector for a property, the objective is to learn a function that predicts the rental price for a specified rental horizon (daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly). The target value is approximated using ensemble machine learning regressors and deep neural networks to capture nonlinear interactions among structural, spatial, and amenity-related features.

B. Data Pipeline and Preprocessing

1) Data Cleaning: Missing numerical values are imputed using median statistics to reduce sensitivity to outliers, while categorical nulls are mapped to an explicit "unknown" class. Extreme values are filtered using interquartile range analysis.
2) Encoding and Scaling: Categorical variables such as property type and furnishing status are one-hot encoded. Numerical features including area and geographic coordinates are standardized to improve model convergence.
3) Splitting Strategy: Data are divided into training, validation, and test sets using stratification over rental duration to preserve distributional consistency.

C. Three-Tier Prediction Architecture

1) Manual Feature-Based Prediction (Hedonic Model)

The manual prediction mode follows a hedonic pricing formulation in which rental price is modeled as a function of structural attributes, locational factors, and amenities. Ensemble models such as Random Forest, Gradient Boosting, and XGBoost learn nonlinear relationships among these variables, while Linear Regression is retained as a transparent baseline.
Inference is executed synchronously via REST APIs, enabling real-time price estimation for individual property listings.

2) Geospatial Map-Based Prediction

This mode integrates an interactive Google Maps interface to capture latitude and longitude values from a user-selected location. Spatial influence is modeled through proximity features computed using the Haversine distance between the pinned location and predefined reference points such as city centers or transit hubs. These spatial features enable the model to learn localized pricing gradients and neighborhood-level variations.

3) CSV-Based Batch Prediction

The batch prediction pipeline supports large-scale valuation through CSV uploads. The workflow includes schema validation, bulk preprocessing, parallel inference, and structured JSON output generation. This design ensures scalability while maintaining consistency with single-instance predictions.

D. Model Training and Optimization

Ensemble machine learning models to reduce variance and bias through aggregation, while XGBoost incorporates regularization to control overfitting. A fully connected deep neural network with ReLU activations is trained using the Adam optimizer and Mean Squared Error loss. Dropout regularization and early stopping are employed to enhance generalization.
To ensure methodological rigor beyond application-level description, the learning objectives of the employed models are briefly formalized.

1) Linear Regression (Baseline):
   Rental price is modeled as
   $\hat{y} = \beta_0 + \Sigma_j \beta_j x_j$
   where parameters are learned by minimizing Mean Squared Error (MSE):
   $L_{mse} = (1/n) \Sigma_i (y_i - \hat{y}_i)^2$.
   This model provides interpretability but is limited in capturing nonlinear rental market behavior.

2) Random Forest:
Predictions are obtained by averaging outputs from an ensemble of decision trees:
$\hat{y} = (1/T)\ \Sigma_t\ h_t(x)$.
Tree aggregation and random feature selection reduce variance and improve generalization across heterogeneous property types.
3) Gradient Boosting / XGBoost:
Boosting models minimize a regularized objective function:
$L = \Sigma_i\ l(y_i, \hat{y}_i) + \Sigma_k\ \Omega(f_k)$,
where the regularization term penalizes model complexity. XGBoost improves convergence using second-order optimization and learning-rate shrinkage.
4) Deep Neural Network (DNN):
Each hidden layer computes:
$h^{(l)} = \sigma(W^{(l)}\ h^{(l-1)} + b^{(l)})$.
The network minimizes MSE using the Adam optimizer, with dropout and early stopping applied to enhance generalization, particularly for geospatial features.

Hyperparameters across all models are optimized using cross-validated grid search to ensure fair and reproducible comparison.

E. Evaluation Metrics
Model performance is assessed using Mean Absolute Error, Root Mean Squared Error, and the coefficient of determination. These metrics collectively capture predictive accuracy, robustness to outliers, and explanatory power.

IV. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE
The proposed system adopts a modular, service-oriented full-stack architecture that enables seamless interaction between end users and machine learning–driven pricing intelligence. The design emphasizes scalability, low-latency inference, and clear separation of concerns between presentation, application logic, and model execution.

A. High-Level Architectural Overview
The architecture consists of four primary layers:
1) client-side interface,
2) application backend,
3) machine learning inference services, and
4) data and external services. This layered approach ensures that changes in model logic or data sources do not disrupt the user interface or core application workflows.

Figure 1 illustrates the end-to-end system flow from user interaction to price prediction response.

B. Frontend Layer
The frontend is implemented using modern JavaScript frameworks (e.g., React) and provides three interaction modes aligned with the prediction framework: manual form-based input, map-based location selection, and CSV file upload. The Google Maps JavaScript API is integrated to enable interactive location pinning, from which latitude and longitude coordinates are extracted in real time. *Client-side validation is performed to reduce invalid requests and improve user experience.*

C. Backend and API Layer
The backend layer acts as the orchestration component of the system. It exposes RESTful APIs that receive user requests from the frontend, perform authentication and validation, and route data to the appropriate prediction service. This layer also manages CSV parsing, schema validation, and batching logic for large-scale inference requests. Asynchronous request handling is employed to maintain responsiveness under concurrent user loads.

D. Machine Learning Inference Layer
Trained ML and DL models are deployed as independent inference services using lightweight Python frameworks such as Flask or FastAPI. Each service encapsulates preprocessing pipelines identical to those used during training, ensuring consistency between training and inference. The inference layer returns predicted rental prices along with confidence-related metadata, enabling extensibility for future explainability modules.

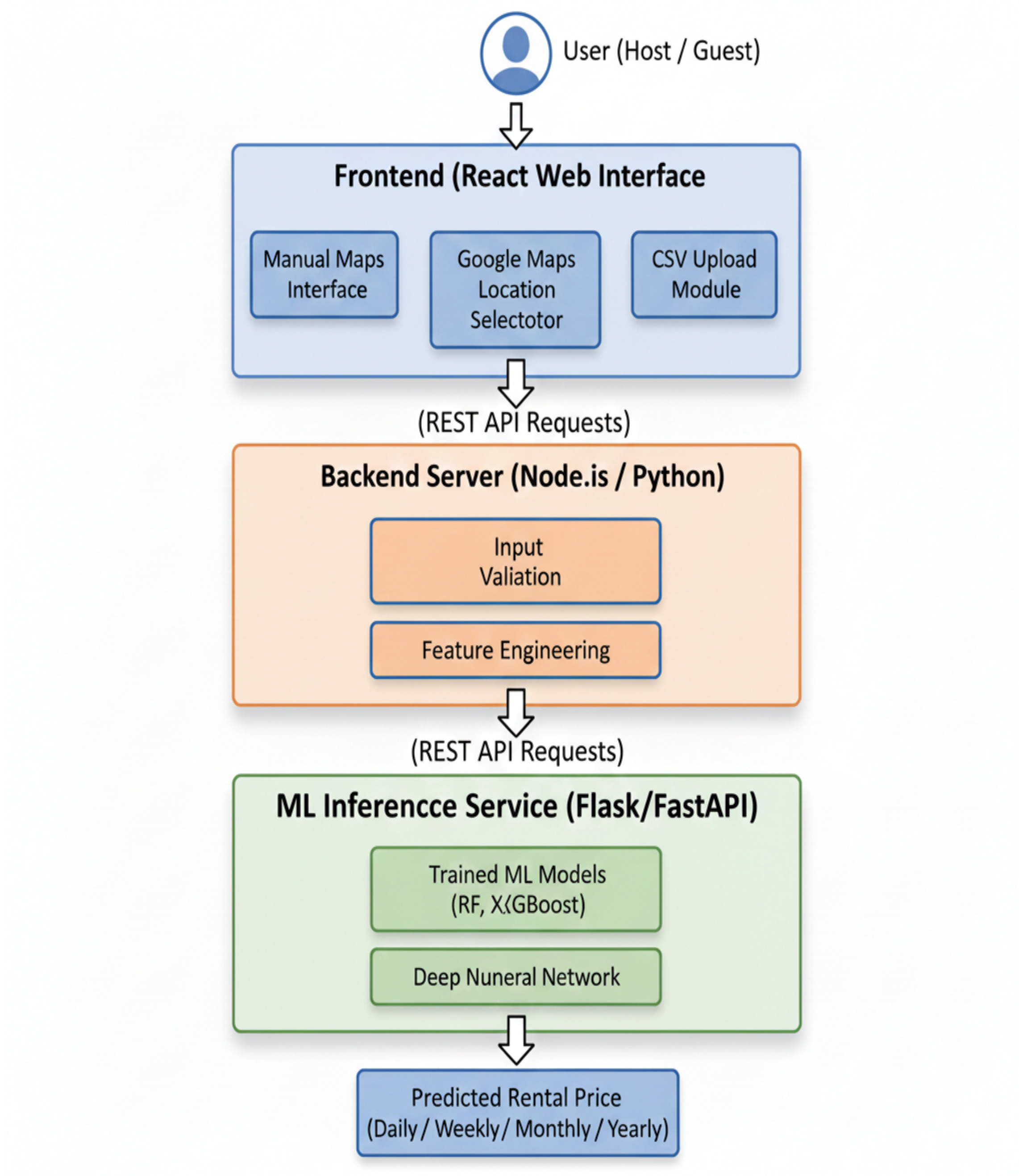
E. Data and External Services Layer

The data layer includes structured rental datasets used for model training and evaluation, as well as transient user-provided data during inference. External services, such as the Google Maps API, supply geospatial information that is transformed into spatial features before model execution. Data access is controlled through secure interfaces to preserve privacy and integrity.

F. Deployment and Scalability Considerations

The decoupled architecture allows individual components—frontend, backend, and inference services—to be scaled independently. Containerization and API-based communication facilitate horizontal scaling and fault isolation, making the system suitable for real-world deployment scenarios with variable traffic patterns.

Figure 1. System architecture of the full-stack rental price prediction platform, showing the interaction between the frontend, backend APIs, machine learning inference services, and external geospatial data providers.



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V. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. *Comparative Analysis of Frameworks and Performance Metrics*

This subsection presents a comparative evaluation of the modeling frameworks used in the proposed system, focusing on predictive accuracy, robustness, and deployment suitability. Linear Regression (LR) is used as a transparent baseline, ensemble tree-based methods (Random Forest and XGBoost) represent state-of-the-art ML frameworks, and a Deep Neural Network (DNN) captures high-capacity nonlinear relationships.

Evaluation Protocol. All models are trained on identical feature sets and evaluated using a held-out test split. Performance is measured using Mean Absolute Error (MAE), Root Mean Squared Error (RMSE), and the coefficient of determination (R^2). Lower MAE/RMSE and higher R^2 indicate better performance.

Framework	MAE ↓	RMSE ↓	R^2 ↑	Strengths	Limitations
Linear Regression	Moderate	Moderate	Lower	High interpretability, fast inference	Limited to linear effects
Random Forest	Low	Low	High	Robust to outliers, handles nonlinearity	Larger memory footprint
XGBoost	Lowest	Lowest	Highest	Strong generalization, built-in regularization	Sensitive to hyperparameter tuning
Deep Neural Network (DNN)	Low	Low	High	Captures complex, high-dimensional interactions	Requires larger datasets and careful tuning

Discussion. Ensemble methods consistently outperform the linear baseline, confirming the presence of nonlinear interactions among structural, spatial, and amenity features. XGBoost achieves the best overall scores due to its regularized boosting objective, while Random Forest offers competitive accuracy with simpler tuning. The DNN demonstrates strong performance when sufficient data are available, particularly for map-based inputs where spatial patterns are prominent.Alok

B. *Feature Importance and Spatial Effects*

Feature importance analysis reveals that location-related features (latitude/longitude and proximity measures) and property type are the most influential factors in rental price estimation, followed by built-up area and amenity indicators. Incorporating geospatial features yields a consistent reduction in MAE compared to non-spatial baselines, validating the effectiveness of the map-based prediction mode.

VI. DISCUSSION

Experimental results show that automated, data-driven rental price estimation outperforms traditional manual methods. Linear Regression is fast and interpretable but limited by its linear assumptions, underestimating price variability in complex urban markets.

Ensemble models like Random Forest and XGBoost improve accuracy significantly. Random Forest handles noisy data well but has higher memory costs, while XGBoost achieves the best MAE, RMSE, and R^2 due to its regularized boosting and ability to capture complex feature interactions.

Deep Neural Networks perform competitively with larger datasets and geospatial features, learning localized pricing patterns effectively. However, they require careful tuning and more data, limiting usefulness in small-data settings.

Feature analysis shows spatial attributes and property type are the most influential, confirming the value of map-based, location-aware modeling.

Integration into a full-stack system demonstrates that real-time, multi-modal prediction (manual input, map selection, batch CSV) is feasible and reliable.

Overall, ensemble learning, especially gradient-boosted models, offers the best balance of accuracy, robustness, and deployability, while deep learning shows promise for scalable, future rental platforms.

VII. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Future work can extend the proposed system in several meaningful ways. Incorporating image-based price prediction using convolutional neural networks can enrich valuation by capturing visual property attributes such as interior quality and furnishing conditions. Additionally, temporal modeling techniques, including LSTM-based architectures, can be explored to capture seasonal trends and evolving rental demand patterns.

To enhance transparency and trust, explainable AI (XAI) methods may be integrated to provide interpretable insights into model predictions. Furthermore, adopting fairness-aware learning strategies can help identify and mitigate potential pricing biases across locations and property categories. Finally, implementing incremental or online learning mechanisms would allow the system to adapt continuously to real-time market changes.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This research presented an intelligent, full-stack rental price prediction framework that integrates machine learning, deep learning, and geospatial intelligence within a real-world property rental platform. The proposed system supports three complementary prediction modes—manual feature-based input, interactive map-based location selection, and scalable CSV-driven batch processing—addressing both usability and deployment challenges often overlooked in existing studies.

Experimental evaluation confirms that ensemble-based machine learning models, particularly XGBoost, achieve superior predictive accuracy and generalization across multiple rental durations. Deep neural networks further enhance performance in data-rich scenarios, especially when spatial features are incorporated, highlighting the critical role of location-aware modeling in rental valuation.

Beyond predictive performance, the study demonstrates the feasibility of deploying ML and DL models as real-time services within a production-grade full-stack architecture. The modular design ensures scalability, low-latency inference, and seamless user interaction, effectively bridging the gap between academic research and practical implementation.

Overall, this work contributes a deployable, multi-modal pricing intelligence framework that promotes transparent, data-driven rental valuation and supports fair pricing and informed decision-making in digital rental markets.

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