

Practical AI for tourism businesses – saving time for your highest-value work

 By [Natalia Rosa](#)

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The six-year-old was handed a blank sheet of paper and a box of crayons. As kids do, they coloured with reckless abandon, unconstrained by the lines.

Tourism businesses today face a similar blank canvas with AI tools now available. The key is to tap into one's inner child-like curiosity and creative spirit.



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In 2024, tourism businesses can and should incorporate AI in their day-to-day workflow to enhance the productivity of their staff to free them up to focus on their highest-value work.

The ideas shared here are grounded in real-world use cases, affordable starter tools, and an entrepreneurial mindset.

Getting tactical with AI

AI already quietly powers many consumer travel experiences. Airlines use chatbots for customer service queries. Metasearch brands leverage algorithms to recommend personalised options. Price prediction tools forecast best booking times.

In most cases, AI handles high efficiency, repetitive tasks that don't require human nuance or empathy. The opportunity for tourism brands is using AI similarly behind the scenes to streamline workflows. This saves time for consumer-centric tasks where the human touch still matters most.

But it's important to remember the balance between the "Human Touch" and "AI Efficiency".

Think back to a time you personally needed to change a flight due to an emergency. You likely appreciated the customer service agent who expressed genuine concern and rapidly solved your problem.



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AI matches human creativity in generating a perfectly personalised holiday plan. But a compassionate voice and ability to tailor experiences to meet shared values is where people still outperform machines. Tourism pros add value by focusing efforts on building meaningful connections vs. technical transactions.

So, what could your business be using AI for in 2024 without spending a fortune on technology?

- **Research and ideation:** Need inspiration on special experience ideas for a honeymooning couple that loves the outdoors and wants to visit Patagonia? ChatGPT can instantly propose options like trekking in Torres del Paine National Park which you can then refine through further prompts.
- **Translation:** Rather than incurring the expense of professional translation services, tools like DeepL and ChatGPT can accurately convert text or audio files between languages. This helps tourism brands easily publish multilingual content.
- **Transcription:** Upload a customer interview audio file to Deepgram which will automatically generate an interview transcript for analysis. Share the transcript with ChatGPT to create a summarised meeting minutes report.
- **Content creation and enhancement:** Struggling to come up with new social media post ideas or need to write a difficult email to break some bad news? Perhaps you want to come up with a bunch of templates? Both Claude and ChatGPT can craft fresh and tailored content in seconds.

The power of the perfect prompt

As they say, what you put in, you get out and that's certainly the case in AI output. The key to effectively deploying AI tools lies in providing clear instructions just as you would for a human assistant. **To craft a well-structured prompt:**

- Give the AI a role, i.e. you are a travel advisor who specialises in luxury travel.
- Outline exactly what you want done.
- Specify desired formats, tone, etc.
- Provide as much relevant context as possible.

Think of the AI as the most eager yet inexperienced intern waiting to take on tasks. The more background offered, the

better it can assist. Don't be afraid to have a conversation with it.

Much like the six-year-olds with their creativity unleashed, tourism pros willing to courageously experiment with emerging technologies stand to gain tremendous advantages over rivals.

However, some of your team may express valid concerns about AI eventually threatening their jobs. If you're a manager in a tourism business, you can proactively ease anxieties through empathetic transparency and gradual, low-risk experiments.

Getting buy-in and overcoming internal resistance

While AI integration can boost productivity, the technology may spark valid concerns across staff over potential job impacts or complex integration hassles.

Empathetic managers have an opportunity to get ahead of anxieties through transparent conversations combined with gradual, low-risk experimentation.

Start by genuinely listening to worries during one-on-one consultations to sort misinformation from legitimate fears. Design educational sessions and training materials that clearly communicate how AI aims to enhance existing roles versus their replacement; highlight specific productivity gains and new opportunities for more meaningful, rewarding work that technology could unlock.



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For willing participants, slowly roll out contained AI pilot projects to minimise disruption while allowing hands-on experience to guide evolution. Consider tying tools to performance incentives to motivate usage for early adopters.

As small successes emerge, create channels for staff to share their positive integration journeys to inspire wider adoption.

For reluctant members, have exploratory career chats focused on aligning AI capabilities to individual workplace passions, strengths, and development areas to shift the narrative from tech versus people to inclusive collaboration.

With this opportunity-focused mindset anchored in compassionate, collaborative change management, common team reservations can transform into active excitement and engagement powering progress in the adoption of AI in your travel business.

Your blank canvas awaits. The time is now to grab the virtual crayons and start colouring outside the lines using AI in your tourism business in 2024. It's only going to get smarter and faster, and so can you

ABOUT NATALIA ROSA

Natalia Rosa is the MD of Big Ambitions, a specialist travel and tourism communications and marketing organisation which helps tourism and travel organisations connect with their members and customers.

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