USE CASES // TOURISM AND TRAVEL

AI in Tourism and Travel: what's already working, and what's next

Six practical uses of AI and automation for travel agents, tour and activity operators, rental cars and small accommodation, sorted by how proven they are.

> **The short version:** most operators rely on online travel agents for bookings, and the guest relationship sits with them. AI can cut the admin, and a few cheap steps help you be found when travellers ask an AI assistant. Evidence here is mostly vendor material.

Where the sector sits

Tourism Research Australia counts **361,270 tourism businesses** (June 2025), about 95% with fewer than 20 employees. No government survey of tourism AI use exists that we could find. Tourism Tribe reports **71% of operators** have started using AI tools, but only about 19% feel confident (sample and method not disclosed). A European survey found 12% of Australians have used AI to plan or book a holiday.

What's typically painful

Heavy dependence on online travel agents (commission, and they own the guest inbox), re-keying between booking systems, thin seasonal staffing, and a skills gap: 40% of operators say they lack the skills to use AI fully (Tourism Tribe).

Established: businesses like yours are already doing this

Use case	The everyday problem	What the AI does	What the evidence says
Guest enquiry auto-replies (accommodation)	The same questions about check-in, parking and pets, at all hours.	Replies from your property's facts and escalates anything unusual. Built into some agent platforms.	Vendor claim (Booking.com): partners report higher satisfaction than with older messaging tools. No time-saving figure.
Dynamic room pricing	Rates are set by feel, so peaks are missed or rooms over-discounted.	Reads local demand and adjusts rates across your channels.	Vendor claim (SiteMinder): one five-cottage NSW property reports revenue up 22.4%. Single case.
Itinerary and proposal drafting (travel agents)	Hours go on researching and writing itineraries and client emails.	Drafts from the client brief and your preferred suppliers. The agent checks prices and availability.	Survey (Amadeus, 750+ sellers): over 75% use AI globally; 36% in Asia Pacific use it for itinerary suggestions.

Emerging: early adopters are starting, worth planning for

Use case	The everyday problem	What the AI does	What the evidence says
Booking emails into the reservation system (tour operators)	Group and agent bookings arrive by email and are retyped.	Reads the email, extracts dates, numbers and contacts and pre-fills a draft booking for staff to confirm.	No verified figure. Vendor tools exist (launched 2023); no adoption evidence.
Being found by AI trip planners	Travellers increasingly ask AI assistants, which may not name you or read your site.	Fix your own site and listings so AI tools can read them: clear facts, structured data, fresh reviews.	No verified booking uplift. Tourism Tribe says 42% of travellers used AI to plan in 2025, but other surveys put Australian use lower.
Damage photos and check-in (independent rental cars)	Scratch disputes and slow counter check-in.	Compares pickup and return photos to flag new damage. Digital licence capture.	Weak for independents. Trade-press figures come from large operators overseas. No Australian evidence found.

Before you start

Protect personal information. The Privacy Commissioner's guidance (OAIC) advises against entering personal information into public AI tools, and asks you to check whether a vendor can see or train on what you enter. Check whether the Privacy Act applies to your business, and tell customers when they are dealing with an AI. Passport, driver licence and payment details are high-risk, so keep card data in your payment gateway, never in an email or AI prompt. **Keep a person on refunds and cancellations.** An AI reply that promises a refund or availability can bind you under Australian Consumer Law.

Sources: Tourism Research Australia, Tourism Businesses in Australia, June 2025; Tourism Tribe State of AI in Tourism 2025 (Travel Daily, Global Travel Media); Europ Assistance Holiday Barometer 2026; Amadeus travel seller study (iTBrief, Oct 2026); Booking.com (AltexSoft, Travolution); SiteMinder case study (Hotel Tech Report); AutoRentalNews, Sep 2023; OAIC guidance on commercially available AI products. Outcome figures marked vendor claim or company claim are the supplier's own and have not been independently verified. Survey figures reflect the businesses surveyed and may not match every firm.

Want to talk this through for your business?

Book a free 15-minute call. We'll look at your situation and give you a straight answer, with no jargon and no sales pitch.

Let's Chat

Opens the request form on our website. Free, no obligation.