



# Guidebook: Building a Brand in the AI Age

How modern hospitality brands stay visible, desirable, and differentiated in an AI-driven world

# Embrace AI or Perish Fighting It.

The travel landscape is undergoing its most significant shift since the birth of the internet. Artificial Intelligence is not a fleeting trend, it's a fundamental force, more revolutionary than electricity for any industry, and hospitality is not an exception.



***« AI is one of the most important things humanity is working on. It is more profound than electricity or fire.»***

— Sundar Pichai  
CEO of Google & Alphabet

# Every hospitality brand is now evaluated, ranked, recommended and surfaced algorithmically

- ◆ Travellers discover stays visually, emotionally, socially, and increasingly through social media and AI assistants.
- ◆ Google has rolled out the AI mode in search.
- ◆ OTAs are going all-in on AI curation.
- ◆ Social platforms are now discovery engines.







**« There will be two kinds of companies at the end of this decade: those that are fully utilizing AI, and those that are out of business.»**

*— Peter Diamandis  
Founder of Singularity University*

# **We've fully entered the AI era — and there's no turning back.**

This guide shows you the frameworks, tools, and a checklist to ensure you're in the first group.



# AI Has Changed How Travelers Find You

Search is no longer keyword-based

It is:



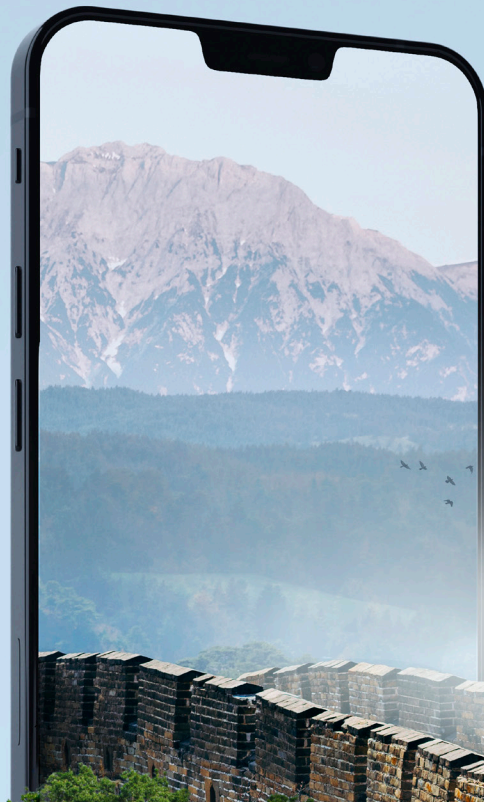
**Visual**



**Emotional**



**AI-curated**



# AI search traffic is exploding

ChatGPT drives 15–20% of referral traffic for brands like Walmart, Etsy, and Target.

Travel behavior mirrors this shift:

## AI Adoption in Travel

**50%** of travelers aged 18–34 use AI to plan vacations

**30%** of travelers over 65 use AI to research destinations

Source: Booking.com

## Social-first travel discovery

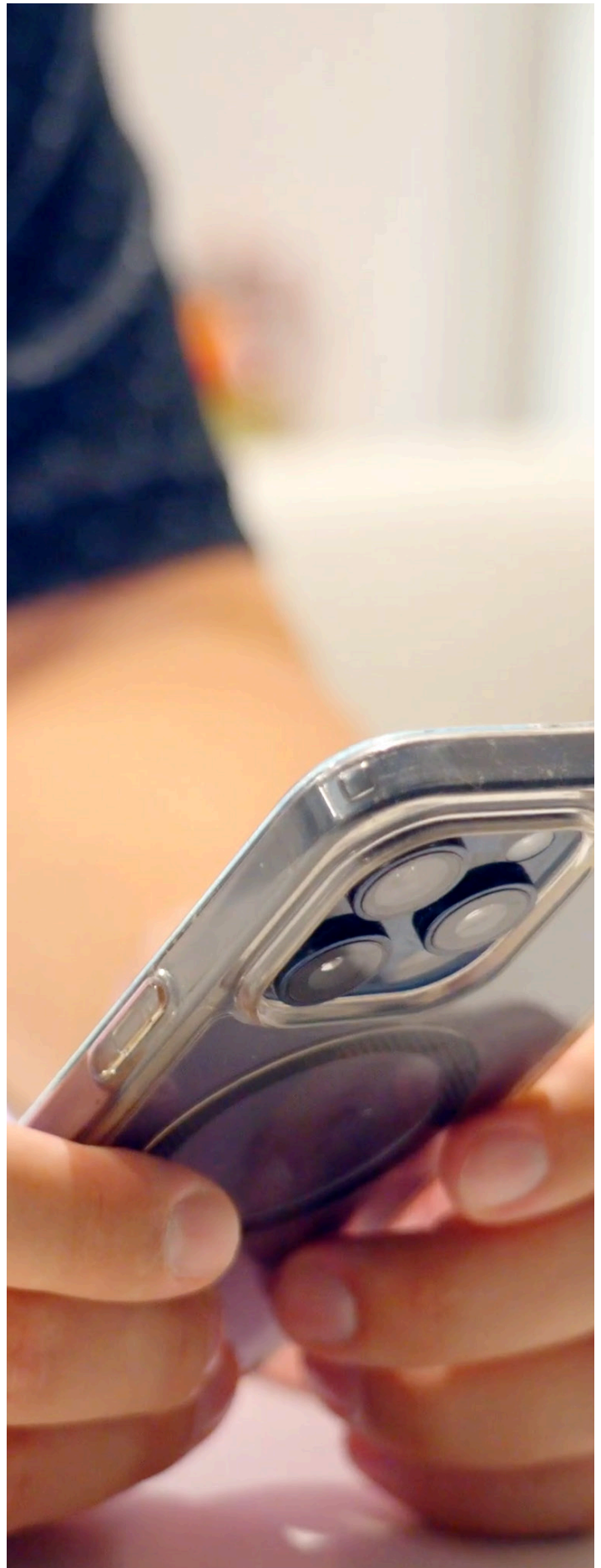
**2023: 57%** of Millennials and Gen Z use social media as planning sources for their travel.

**Skift.**

**Today, 75%** of Millennials say social media influences their travel decisions.

**atlys**→

Sources: Skift & Altys





# Emotion-first search

People no longer search by keywords

They search for emotions and experiences

Instagram is now searchable by Google and LLMs.

“Your visual content ≠ “just for followers” anymore”

**AI can read:**

Who’s in the photo/video (family, couple, digital nomads)

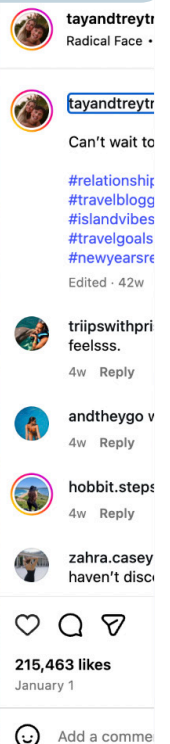
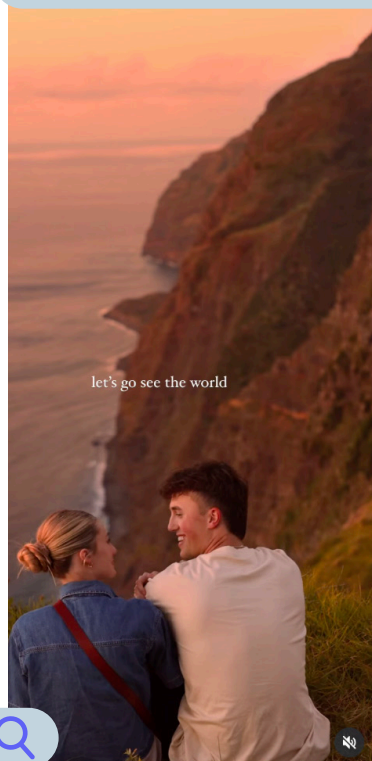
The vibe (luxury, adventure, kid-friendly)

## Cozy cabin



## Family

## Romance



# What This Means for Your Brand

In an AI-powered world, your brand isn't what you say it is.

**Your brand is what AI and travelers infer from your:**

- ◆ Photos
- ◆ Descriptions
- ◆ Reviews
- ◆ Social content
- ◆ Messaging style
- ◆ Consistency across channels



**If** your assets are inconsistent, generic, outdated, or unclear – AI cannot recommend you accurately.

**If** your visuals don't evoke emotion – you lose visibility in social-first discovery.

**If** your reviews or tone don't align – the algorithm distrusts your brand.

# The 3P Framework:

## PROMISE

### What You Stand For & Deliver

#### Clarify:

- ◆ Who are your ideal guests?
- ◆ What experience do they get?
- ◆ Why choose your stay instead of another?

#### Examples :

1. "The most reliable stays for remote workers."
2. "Thoughtfully designed family escapes near the slopes."
3. "Couples-only romantic retreats with curated local experiences."

**If you speak to everyone, you speak to no one.**

## PROOF

### Why AI and travelers should trust you

AI rewards brands that look consistent and credible everywhere.

#### Proof signals AI looks for:

- ◆ High review averages
- ◆ % of 5-star stays
- ◆ Uniform quality across listings
- ◆ Visual coherence across platforms
- ◆ User-generated content & guest stories
- ◆ Social validation
- ◆ A brand that looks the same across
- ◆ OTAs, your website, Instagram, etc.

**In the AI era, consistency = trust.**

## PERSONALITY

### How your brand feels & sounds

#### Define your style across:

- ◆ Photography
- ◆ Website & OTA visuals
- ◆ Voice & tone in messaging
- ◆ Social content
- ◆ Guest communications

#### Ask yourself:

**"If my brand were a person, who would it be?"**

Go beyond "professional" or "friendly."



# How AI Helps You Build a Stronger Brand

## Enhance photos

Fix lighting, declutter, improve composition, correct perspectives.

## Change seasons

Turn summer photos -> Winter for ski season

## Personalize visuals

Make the same home look family-oriented, romantic, or adventure-focused.

## Adapt listings dynamically

Descriptions can change based on:

- season
- guest profile detected
- booking intent

AI-powered “contextual experience”

Start with a **FREE listing audit** and unlock all the AI advantages waiting for your property.





# AI-Driven Guest Experience Becomes Your Brand

Three Phases of Guest Experience, AI Can Support

## Pre-stay

Expectation setting,  
onboarding,  
verification.

## During stay

Support,  
emergencies,  
upsells.

## Post-stay

Gratitude, reviews,  
return stays.

AI enables your team to be more human, not less.



# Understanding the Concept of Agentic AI

**Generative AI** = context = smart autocomplete for words

**Agentic AI** = context + action

Think of it as a team of specialized agents working together or collaborating with a human team.

This is what modern hospitality teams will rely on.

## Agentic AI:

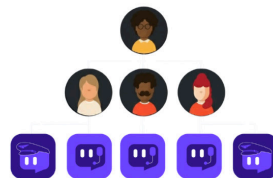
- ◆ Reads messages
- ◆ Understands intent
- ◆ Checks rules (SOPs)
- ◆ Verifies payments
- ◆ Approves early check-ins
- ◆ Triggers work orders
- ◆ Updates systems

## Single Agent vs Multi-Agent



### Single-agent AI

Like one person trying to do marketing, ops, finance, reception and housekeeping



### Multi-agent AI

Like a team of specialists working together:

- ◆ One agent handles messaging
- ◆ One checks payments
- ◆ One validates policies
- ◆ One triggers tasks

# How to Train AI to Become a True Brand Ambassador

To function well, AI needs:

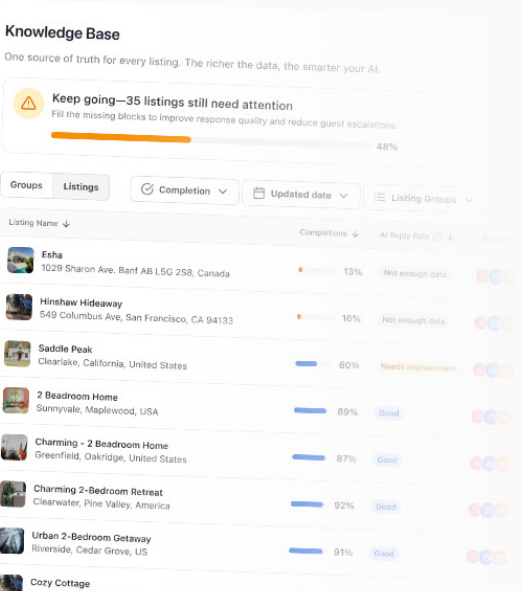
- ◆ Context
- ◆ Rules
- ◆ SOPs
- ◆ Examples
- ◆ Feedback humans

If training isn't embedded in daily workflow, it won't happen.

## Training Your AI


Structure the chaos >>> define rules >>> Build SOPs >>> Let your team iterate with AI

**Get Your FREE Agentic-AI demo**



Listing Name	Completion	AI Reply Rate
Esha 1029 Sharon Ave. Banff AB T5G 2S8, Canada	13%	Not enough data
Hinshaw Hideaway 549 Columbus Ave, San Francisco, CA 94133	10%	Not enough data
Saddle Peak Clearlake, California, United States	60%	Needs improvement
2 Bedroom Home Sunnyvale, Maplewood, USA	89%	Good
Charming - 2 Bedroom Home Greenfield, Oakridge, United States	87%	Good
Charming 2-Bedroom Retreat Clearwater, Pine Valley, America	92%	Good
Urban 2-Bedroom Getaway Riverside, Cedar Grove, US	91%	Good
Cozy Cottage Napa Valley, California, USA	Done	Autopilot Ready







# Checklist for Building an AI-Ready Brand

## 01. AI & SEARCH

### Understanding the landscape

- ☐ Travelers now use AI to research, plan, and compare stays.
- ☐ Your top of funnel is visual, emotional, and AI-driven.
- ☐ AI needs proper context to accurately represent your brand.

### Actions

- ☐ Optimize photos, videos, titles, and texts to convey emotion.
- ☐ Consistent content across OTAs, websites, and social media.
- ☐ Presence on visual platforms like TikTok and Instagram to feed the visual funnel.

### Metrics to track

- ☐ AI referral traffic (ChatGPT, Perplexity, Claude, Gemini).
- ☐ Search -> View -> Booking conversion rate.
- ☐ The overall quality of your ads (name, title, description, photos).

## 02. BRAND

### Understanding the basics

- ☐ Define your ideal customer profile (ICP).
- ☐ Create a clear and specific brand promise
- ☐ Define your brand personality (visual, tone, style).
- ☐ Work on showing a consistent proof across channels (reviews, UGC, visual coherence).

### Actions

- ☐ Create clear and consistent visual identity.
- ☐ Have a consistent tone voice across the board.
- ☐ Tailor your promise to your ideal customer.
- ☐ Create landing pages for each customer persona.

### Metrics to track

- ☐ Diversity of your channels (no channel above 50%).
- ☐ Direct booking rate.
- ☐ Average review score and the percentage of 5-star reviews.

### 3. PHOTO & LISTING OPTIMIZATION (AI)

#### Understanding the basics

- ☐ AI can improve your photos.
- ☐ AI can create seasonal versions of your Photos.
- ☐ AI can personalize your photos.
- ☐ AI can generate videos from your photos.
- ☐ Your listings can be personalized according to season and traveler.

#### Actions

- ☐ Use AI tools to improve and optimize your photos.
- ☐ Tailor your listing descriptions to different guest segments.
- ☐ Test multiple listing variations to see what performs best.

#### Metrics to track

- ☐ Performance of each listing Variation.
- ☐ Impact of AI-enhanced photos on CTR, views, and bookings.

### 04. GUEST EXPERIENCE (5-STAR STANDARD)

#### Understanding the basics

- ☐ Three key phases of the guest journey (pre-stay / during stay / post-stay).
- ☐ The difference between transactional interactions and hospitality and what can be automated.

#### Actions

- ☐ Automate the pre-stay phase (instructions, verification, onboarding).
- ☐ Automate frequent and repetitive guest questions.
- ☐ Have clear SOPs for every key moment of the guest journey.
- ☐ Offer relevant and well-timed upsells.
- ☐ Request reviews after every happy stay.

#### Metrics to track

- ☐ Response and resolution time
- ☐ Additional revenue generated per stay.
- ☐ Percentage of 5-star reviews.



## 05. AGENTIC AI & AUTOMATION

### Understanding the basics

- ☐ Generative AI VS agentic AI.
- ☐ What is a multi-agent AI system.
- ☐ Continuous training and iteration = quality

### Actions

- ☐ Use agentic AI for guest messaging.
- ☐ Organize my AI context (rules, resources, SOPs).
- ☐ Actively train and improve your AI on a daily basis.

### Metrics

- ☐ % of conversations resolved by AI.
- ☐ Overall automation ratio
- ☐ AI Knowledge Base completion rate

## 06. GLOBAL ALIGNMENT

### Understanding the basics

- ☐ AI + brand + guest experience = profitable growth.
- ☐ The importance of AI adoption by 2030 (adopt AI or fall behind).

### Actions

- ☐ Have a structured, measurable AI plan.
- ☐ Have clear ownership for search, brand, guest experience, and AI operations.

### Metrics

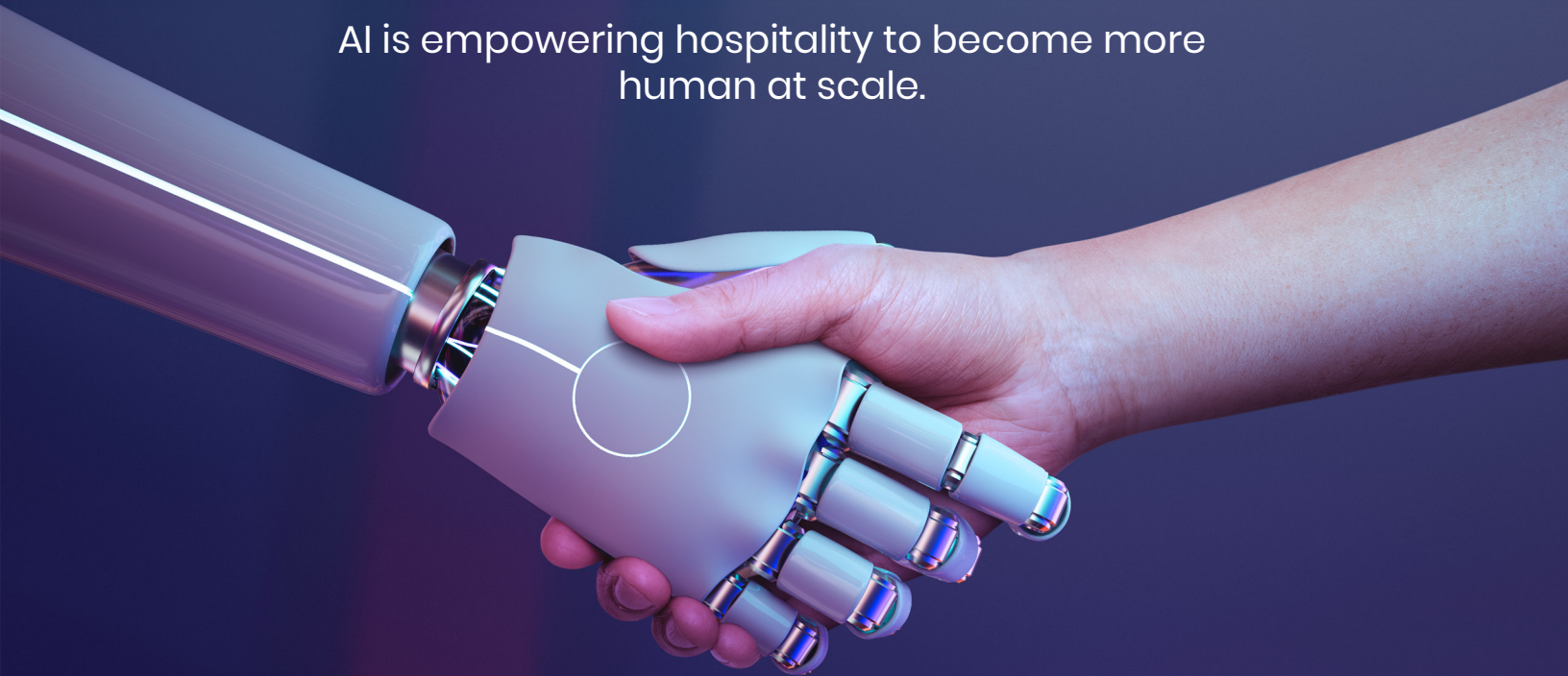
- ☐ I track my progress regularly.
- ☐ I maintain a consolidated scorecard.

# Conclusion

Building a brand in the AI age is no longer optional.  
It's your competitive advantage.

Your visuals, voice, guest experience, and  
operational excellence now inform not just  
travelers but algorithms.  
AI is not replacing hospitality.

AI is empowering hospitality to become more  
human at scale.





# About the authors



**Francois Gouelo is the Co-founder and CEO of Enso Connect**, a leading AI-powered guest experience platform. A technologist and entrepreneur, he founded Enso Connect to solve the critical challenges of tech fragmentation and rising guest expectations in vacation rentals. The platform now serves over 7 million guests worldwide and is ranked among the Top 250 Vacation Rental Companies by Skift. The platform delivers measurable ROI, time savings and 5-star reviews for STR operators. Through Enso Connect, he is defining the future of AI-powered hospitality.



**Sebastien Grosjean is the CEO and Founder of Smily**, the #1 vacation rental software in France. A serial entrepreneur with 14 ventures and two decades in short-term rentals, he built on his family's 39-year legacy as owners and managers. After creating the first channel manager in 2005, he launched Smily (formerly BookingSync) in 2009 and now serves on Booking.com's Connectivity Advisory Board. Through Smily, he is pioneering AI-reimagined innovation in the vacation rental industry.

# Put Your AI Brand Strategy into Action

Experience the tools that make  
it possible. Try them for free with  
these offers:

**Enso Connect** : Automate Your  
Guest Messaging  
**[Claim Your Free Agentic AI  
AutoPilot]**

**Smily**: Audit Your Listings  
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