

Travel Agents

AI trip planners, conversational booking and automated servicing are taking over research and routine booking, leaving agents the complex and high-touch trips.

EXPOSURE	WINDOW	ADOPTION TODAY	READING
67 High exposure	1–4 yrs until change lands	Very High	Substantial automation of routine work. Exposure is the share of today's work AI can plausibly take on within the window.

§ 01 WHAT IS HAPPENING

What is happening to travel agents

Impact

Consumers now ask ChatGPT, Gemini or dedicated planners such as Mindtrip to build itineraries and compare options, and online travel agencies have embedded assistants that search, book and handle changes in conversation. Inside the trade, the global distribution systems and agency platforms automate fare searching, ticketing, schedule-change handling and itinerary documents, and generative tools draft client proposals and marketing. The agent's day shifts from searching and booking towards curating complex multi-destination trips, managing group and corporate travel, handling disruption with a human voice, and selling expertise in destinations and travel styles that generic tools do not have.

Risk

High exposure: research and routine booking are automating fast; value shifts to complex trips, expertise and disruption handling.

The tasks automating fastest are destination research, itinerary drafting, fare and availability searches, simple point-to-point bookings, schedule-change processing, document generation and routine client communication. Tasks that stay human are designing complex or high-value itineraries, negotiating with suppliers, managing groups and events, handling disruption when a client is stranded, judging what a particular client will actually enjoy, and the trust relationship that leads clients to pay for advice. Official occupation-level measures place the role in the highest exposure tier and observed language-model usage is high, which is why the score sits in the high band. Over the 1-4 year window expect further decline in generalist and transactional agents, while specialist advisers in luxury, adventure, cruise and corporate travel remain in demand and use AI to serve more clients each.

Sector readiness

Very High Adoption on Both Sides

Online travel agencies and airlines have deployed conversational AI for search, booking and servicing, and consumers have adopted general chatbots for trip planning faster than almost any other everyday use. Within the trade, Sabre and Amadeus have added AI to their agent platforms and host agencies offer AI proposal and marketing tools to independent advisers. The agents who remain are predominantly specialists working through host agencies or consortia, and many already use AI daily for drafting and research.

§ 02 POSITION

Where you stand

- i Position yourself as a specialist adviser in a destination, travel style or client segment where first-hand knowledge beats generic recommendations.
- ii Be the person who is there when things go wrong, with supplier relationships and authority that no chatbot or online agency offers.
- iii Use AI to do more for more clients, producing proposals, research and documents faster, while charging for the judgement and curation that remain yours.

§ 03 ACTIONS

6 POINTS

What this means for you

Concrete changes to how the work gets done, in the order you are likely to meet them.

- 01 **Specialise or shrink.** Generalist booking is gone to the apps. Choose a niche, luxury, expedition, cruise, destination weddings, a region you know deeply, and build your reputation there.
- 02 **Charge a fee.** Advice is what clients cannot get from software, so price it. A planning fee also filters out clients who only want you to match an online price.
- 03 **Use AI for the first draft.** Build itinerary outlines, proposals and destination briefs with ChatGPT, Gemini or your host agency's tool, then add the supplier knowledge and personal judgement that make it yours.
- 04 **Own disruption.** Be reachable, know your suppliers' escalation routes and solve problems fast when a client is stranded. Every rescue earns a client for life and a referral.
- 05 **Build supplier relationships.** Direct contacts at hotels, tour operators and cruise lines get your clients upgrades and solutions the booking engine cannot. That access is a product.
- 06 **Verify what the AI tells you.** Chatbots invent hotels, opening hours and visa rules. Your clients are increasingly arriving with AI-generated plans that need correcting, and catching those errors is a visible part of your value.

§ 04 CAUSES

6 DRIVERS

What is pushing this change

- 01 **Consumer AI trip planning.** Travellers use ChatGPT, Gemini and purpose-built planners such as Mindtrip to research destinations and build itineraries, bypassing the agent for the planning stage.
- 02 **Conversational booking at online agencies and airlines.** Online travel agencies and carriers have embedded assistants that search, book and service trips in chat, extending self-service to tasks that once needed an agent.
- 03 **Automation in distribution systems.** Sabre and Amadeus automate fare searching, ticketing, schedule-change handling and documentation, cutting the clerical time per booking for agencies.
- 04 **Generative proposals and marketing.** Agents use AI to draft client proposals, destination guides and social content, letting a single adviser serve more clients and compete with larger firms.
- 05 **Direct supplier distribution.** Hotels, airlines and tour operators sell direct through their own AI-assisted channels, reducing the share of travel that passes through an agent.
- 06 **Expectation of instant service.** Clients expect answers and changes immediately at any hour, which favours automated servicing for simple requests and human agents only for the complex.

Impact by sector

The headline figure is an average. Where you work changes the picture.

Leisure and generalist agencies	Highest exposure: simple holidays and point-to-point travel have moved online, and remaining high-street agencies survive on packages, service and older clientele.
Luxury and specialist advisers	Lower practical exposure: clients pay for curation, access and judgement, and advisers use AI to work faster rather than being displaced by it.
Corporate travel management	Booking is largely automated through online booking tools and AI servicing, with human agents concentrated on complex itineraries, duty-of-care and disruption.
Group, cruise and event travel	Coordination of many travellers, suppliers and contracts remains people-intensive and relationship-driven, holding up better than individual leisure bookings.

Skills to build

The skills that keep the human part of this work valuable as the routine part is automated.

- 01 Destination and product expertise.** First-hand knowledge of places, properties and operators is what clients cannot get from a chatbot. Travel, take familiarisation trips and document what you learn.
- 02 Client discovery and curation.** Understanding what a particular client will enjoy, and designing around it, is the advisory skill clients pay for. Build a structured discovery conversation and refine it.
- 03 Supplier negotiation and relationships.** Direct contacts secure upgrades, availability and solutions during disruption. Attend trade events and maintain the relationships deliberately.
- 04 AI-assisted research and proposal drafting.** Producing polished itineraries and proposals quickly with generative tools lets you serve more clients and respond faster. Learn to prompt with client specifics and verify every fact.
- 05 Crisis and disruption management.** Rebooking, rerouting and reassuring clients under pressure is where agents prove their worth. Know your GDS, supplier escalation routes and insurance procedures cold.
- 06 Personal brand and marketing.** Independent advisers win clients through a visible niche and referrals. Use AI to maintain content and newsletters, but let the expertise be unmistakably yours.

Tools in use

KINDS OF TOOL WORTH KNOWING

- 01

Mindtrip. Consumer-facing AI travel planner that illustrates how clients now research and build trips before contacting an adviser.
- 02

General assistants (ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude). Used by agents for first-draft itineraries, destination briefs and marketing copy; every factual claim needs checking against suppliers.

NAMED TOOLS ALREADY IN USE

Sabre	VISIT
Global distribution system and agency platform used for fare search, booking and ticketing, with AI features being added to agent tools.	
Amadeus	VISIT
Global distribution system and travel technology platform used by agencies worldwide, incorporating AI for search, servicing and disruption handling.	
Travefy	VISIT
Itinerary-building and proposal platform widely used by travel advisers, with AI assistance for drafting trip content.	
Travelport	VISIT
Third major distribution system, used by agencies for content aggregation and automated servicing.	

In practice

Ways people in this role are already using AI, and what they get from it.

AI-drafted proposal for a multi-country trip EXAMPLE 1	HOW	An adviser uses a generative assistant to produce a structured first-draft itinerary from the client's discovery notes, then replaces generic suggestions with properties and guides from personal experience and supplier relationships.
	GAIN	A detailed proposal goes to the client within a day rather than a week, with the adviser's judgement visible throughout.
Automated schedule-change handling EXAMPLE 2	HOW	An agency's GDS automation processes airline schedule changes, re-issues tickets within tolerance and flags only the cases that need an agent to call the client and discuss alternatives.
	GAIN	Hundreds of routine changes are handled without agent time, and clients hear from a person only when it matters.

Correcting a client's chatbot plan EXAMPLE 3	HOW	A client arrives with an itinerary generated by a consumer AI tool that includes a closed hotel and an impossible connection, and the adviser reworks it with accurate logistics and better choices.
	GAIN	The client sees the concrete value of expertise and becomes a repeat, fee-paying customer.

§ 09 CONTEXT

How this role compares

Three neighbouring roles chosen to show the direction of travel.

Call Centre Agents MORE EXPOSED	AI IMPACT	Scripted inbound service is being handled by AI agents directly, with less of the curation and relationship work that keeps travel advisers in demand.
	WORK MOVES TO	Remaining call-centre roles focus on escalations and complex cases.
Event Planners DIFFERENT SKILLS, GROWING	AI IMPACT	AI assists with logistics and vendor research, but designing and running live events remains human and demand is growing.
	WORK MOVES TO	Travel agents with group and destination experience can move into event and incentive-travel planning.
Flight Attendants COMPLEMENTARY, LESS EXPOSED	AI IMPACT	AI supports scheduling and operations, but in-flight safety and service remain hands-on and largely unaffected.
	WORK MOVES TO	Both roles depend on the human side of travel, and advisers who understand airline operations serve clients better during disruption.

§ 10 VERDICT

Closing judgement

If you sell travel, the research and booking that once justified your fee are now things a client can do in a chat window in minutes, and that is not going to reverse. What they cannot get from a chatbot is an adviser who has been there, knows which supplier to trust, can design a trip around who they actually are and will answer the phone when the flight is cancelled at midnight. Specialise hard, use the AI tools to produce proposals faster than you ever could, build direct supplier relationships and make your value visible through a fee rather than a commission. The transactional agent is disappearing; the trusted adviser is doing fine.

Evidence and revisions

What the exposure figure rests on, what changed when it was last revised, and the published work cited for this role.

SCORE

67

WINDOW

1-4 years (unchanged)

The 5 October 2026 review held the score.

Exposure Index v2. Inputs: task applicability 47/100 (Microsoft AI applicability score 0.24 for Travel agents); observed usage 54/100 (Anthropic observed exposure 0.41); official exposure tier 100/100 (BLS: very high); labour-market trajectory not yet mapped for this occupation, so its weight was spread across the other inputs; published adoption rating 85/100 (very high adoption). Weighted base 66.8. Final score 67. New report: the window of 1-4 years is set from the score band.

HOW THE FIGURE IS BUILT (EXPOSURE INDEX V2)

Task applicability — Microsoft Research, AI applicability score	47 × 39%	18.4
Observed usage — Anthropic Economic Index, observed exposure	54 × 22%	12.0
Official exposure tier — US BLS AI-exposure category	100 × 22%	22.2
Labour-market trajectory — US BLS projected employment change 2025–35	not measured	—
Published adoption rating — This report’s adoption level	85 × 17%	14.2
Weighted base		66.8
Exposure score		67

MEASURES BEHIND THE SCORE

US Bureau of Labor Statistics · *Employment Projections 2025–35 and AI Exposure Categories* (27 August 2026)
AI-exposure tier: Very high. Projected employment change not yet mapped for this occupation. Matched to Travel agents.

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Microsoft Research · *Working with AI: Measuring the Applicability of Generative AI to Occupations* (10 July 2025)
AI applicability score 0.24 for SOC 41-3041; scaled to 47/100 as the task-applicability input.

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Anthropic · *Anthropic Economic Index report: Cadences* (26 June 2026)
Observed exposure 0.41 for SOC 41-3041; scaled to 54/100 as the observed-usage input.

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UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology · *Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market* (28 January 2026)

UK context: around 70% of UK workers are in occupations with tasks AI could perform or enhance, above the US average; a one-standard-deviation rise in exposure was associated with a 3.9% fall in UK job postings.

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<https://www.careerguard.ai/sources>

§ 12 APPENDIX

Method and sources

Each report was written from a large body of published research. The exposure score itself is computed, not written: it is the CareerGuard Exposure Index, a weighted average of occupation-level measures from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (AI-exposure classification and 2025–35 projections), Microsoft Research (AI applicability scores) and Anthropic (observed exposure), together with the adoption rating published on the report. The organisations and publications below are the standing literature behind the narrative sections. Every source, with dates, licences and archived copies where we are permitted to hold them, is catalogued in the research library.

Exposure Index v2 (October 2026). Each input is scaled to 0–100 and weighted: task applicability 35% (Microsoft AI applicability score ÷ 0.5), observed usage 20% (Anthropic observed exposure ÷ 0.75), official exposure tier 20% (BLS very high = 100, high = 70, moderate = 40, low = 10), labour-market trajectory 10% ($50 - 2.5 \times \text{projected \% employment change}$), published adoption rating 15% (very high = 85, high = 70, medium-high = 55, medium = 40, low-medium = 25, low = 10). Inputs not measured for an occupation are dropped and the remaining weights renormalised. An editorial adjustment of at most ±12 points is allowed only for automation channels the measures cannot see (robotics, self-service, machine vision, medical imaging, RPA/OCR, generative video) and is always logged with its reason. Scores are whole numbers, not rounded to five. The change window shifts one notch (a year at each end) per ten points of movement.

I GLOBAL AND MACROECONOMIC IMPACT OF AI ON WORK**World Economic Forum**

The Future of Jobs Report series — Employer survey of expected job growth and decline, skill shifts and technology adoption (2020, 2023 and 2025 editions); *Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Entry-Level Work* (2026).

AI governance and transformation reports — Frameworks on ethical AI, talent strategy and industry transformation.

McKinsey Global Institute

AI, Automation and the Future of Work series — Research quantifying automation potential by task, sector and demographic, from "Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained" to "Agents, robots, and us" (2025).

Industry-specific reports — Financial services, healthcare, manufacturing and others.

PwC

Global AI Jobs Barometer — Annual analysis of job postings and productivity by AI exposure (2024–2026 editions).

Upskilling Hopes and Fears survey — Employee perceptions and readiness.

Microsoft Research and Anthropic

Working with AI (2025); *Anthropic Economic Index* (2025–2026) — Occupation-level usage data from Copilot and Claude conversations, the two observed-usage measures behind the 2026 revision.

Stanford Digital Economy Lab and Stanford HAI

Canaries in the Coal Mine? (2025–2026); AI Index Report (annual) — Payroll evidence on early-career employment in exposed occupations; annual measurement of AI capability, investment and adoption.

Deloitte

Human Capital Trends series — Workforce, talent and HR technology trends.

Tech Trends series — Emerging technologies and their business implications.

Accenture

Technology Vision series — Forward-looking analysis of emerging technology, with emphasis on AI.

Fjord Trends — Design, innovation and human experience in a digital world.

Boston Consulting Group

AI/ML insights and industry solutions — "The AI Revolution in the Workplace" and related research.

EY

AI and workforce reports — Adoption, talent strategy and ethics.

IBM Institute for Business Value

AI and automation studies — Business models, workforce evolution and leadership.

OECD

AI Policy Observatory — International data and policy on AI, labour markets and skills.

Employment Outlook — Labour-market trends including technological impact (2023–2026 editions).

International Labour Organization

Generative AI and Jobs: A Refined Global Index of Occupational Exposure (2025) — Task-level exposure gradients for every ISCO occupation; successor to the 2023 global index.

International Monetary Fund

Staff Discussion Notes on AI and work (2024, 2026) — Complementarity framing: where AI augments and where it substitutes.

UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

Assessment of AI capabilities and the impact on the UK labour market (2026) — UK occupational exposure and job-posting evidence.

Brookings Institution

AI and automation research — Economic and social implications, displacement and skills.

Yale Budget Lab and Goldman Sachs Research

Tracking the Impact of AI on the Labor Market; AI and the US labour market (2026) — Aggregate labour-market monitoring; macro displacement estimates.

Oxford University (Oxford Martin School)

The Future of Employment — Frey & Osborne and subsequent research on susceptibility to automation.

MIT Technology Review

AI & Work — Reporting on AI research and its implications for industries and jobs.

Gartner

Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence — Maturity and adoption of AI technologies.

Future of Work reports — Workplace models and talent strategy.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Employment Projections 2025–35; AI Exposure Categories; Occupational Outlook Handbook — Ten-year employment projections and, from the 2025 cycle, an AI-exposure tier for every detailed occupation.

Indeed Hiring Lab

AI at Work Report (2025) and posting-market updates — Skill-level transformation estimates and job-posting trends by occupation.

II CORE AI AND MACHINE-LEARNING RESEARCH

OpenAI

Research papers, blog and API documentation — Large language models, generative AI, safety and societal impact.

Google DeepMind

Research papers and blog — Reinforcement learning, AI for science, AGI and ethics.

Meta AI

Research papers and blog — Large language models, computer vision, AI for social good.

Hugging Face

Transformers library and model hub — Open-source state-of-the-art NLP models.

TensorFlow and PyTorch

Documentation and community forums — Core frameworks illustrating practical capability.

arXiv

cs.AI, cs.LG, cs.CV, cs.CL — Pre-print research.

NeurIPS and ICML

Conference proceedings — Top-tier academic research.

ACM and IEEE

Journals and proceedings — ACM Computing Surveys; IEEE Transactions on AI.

Kaggle

Datasets and competition solutions — Applied machine learning on real-world problems.

The Alan Turing Institute

Research and reports — Responsible and applied AI.

III ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE AI DEPLOYMENT

NIST

AI Risk Management Framework — Voluntary framework for managing AI risk.

European Commission

AI Act — Risk-tiered legal framework for AI.

Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI — Principles for responsible development.

Partnership on AI

Research and best practice — Responsible AI development.

AI Now Institute

Annual reports — Social implications: power, inequality, rights.

ACM FAccT

Proceedings — Fairness, accountability and transparency.

Data & Society

Publications — Social implications of data-centric technology.

WIPO

Conversation on IP and AI — Intellectual-property implications of AI.

IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of AI/IS

Ethically Aligned Design — Recommendations for ethical AI design.

Center for AI and Digital Policy

Policy briefs — Accountable AI policy.

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