





THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Navigating between

H Y P E

What is Tourism's AI Future?



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Navigating between

H O P E

What is Tourism's AI Future?



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

What we'll cover...

2025

AI Right Now!



The Hype!



The Hope...



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Have you ever tried:



ChatGPT



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Have you ever tried:

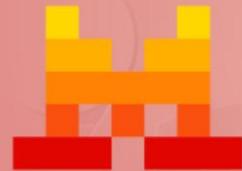
 **Claude**



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Have you ever tried:



Mistral AI

What can AI do?



CREATE

Words & Text

(in many languages)



CREATE

Images & Video



CREATE

Audio & Music



CREATE

Code

What can AI do?



INTERPRET

Words & Text

(in many languages)



INTERPRET

Images & Video



INTERPRET

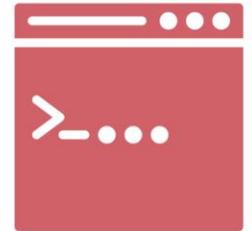
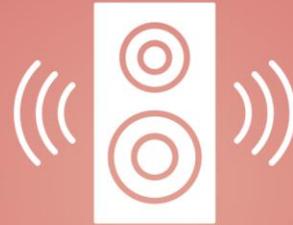
Audio & Music



INTERPRET

Code

Multi-Modal AI



ALL WORKING TOGETHER

Words & Text

(in many languages)

Images & Video

Audio & Music

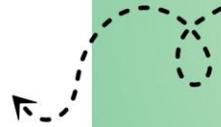
Code



Poetry Camera



Agentic AI



Execute a series of tasks to achieve a goal



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

What do we have in the fridge?





New Browsers

ChatGPT-maker OpenAI releases browser in attempt to rival Google

2 days ago

Lily Jamali

North America Technology correspondent, San Francisco

Share Save

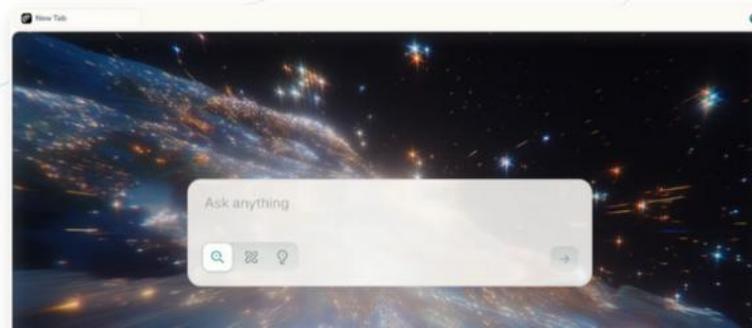
comet

Download

A new browser from Perplexity

The browser that works *for you*

Download Comet



HYPE

**Travellers ask their AI agent
They never visit websites
themselves**



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Discovery

*Do travellers ask AI
or seek human
validation?*



HOPE

**Travellers trust friends and
social posts
AI only sparks ideas**



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Have you been on



HOLIDAY



in the last year?



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Have you been on

HOLIDAY

in the last year?



HAGGIS





THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

In planning your holiday...

Did you use AI?



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

21-40% used AI for their holiday in 2025



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

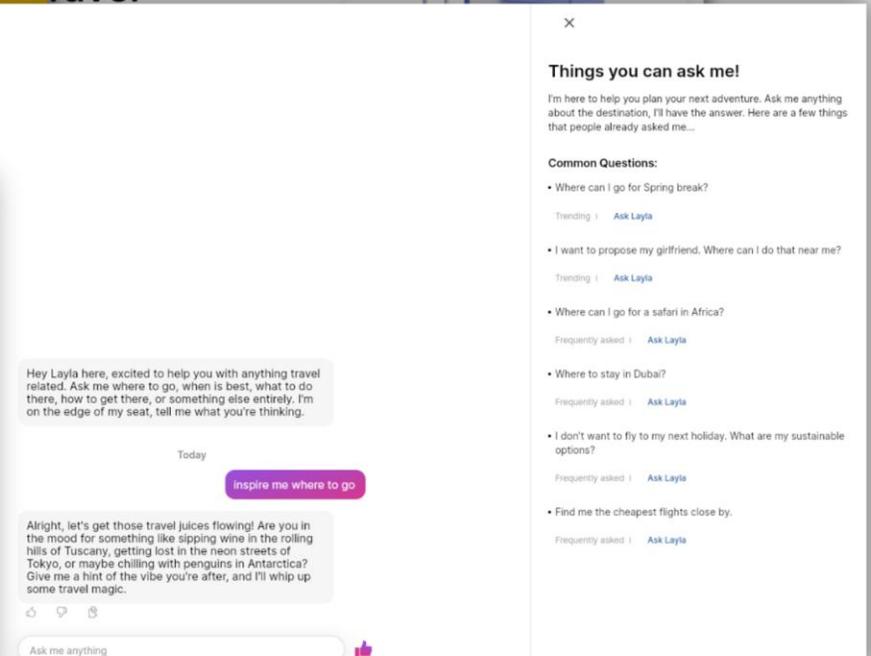
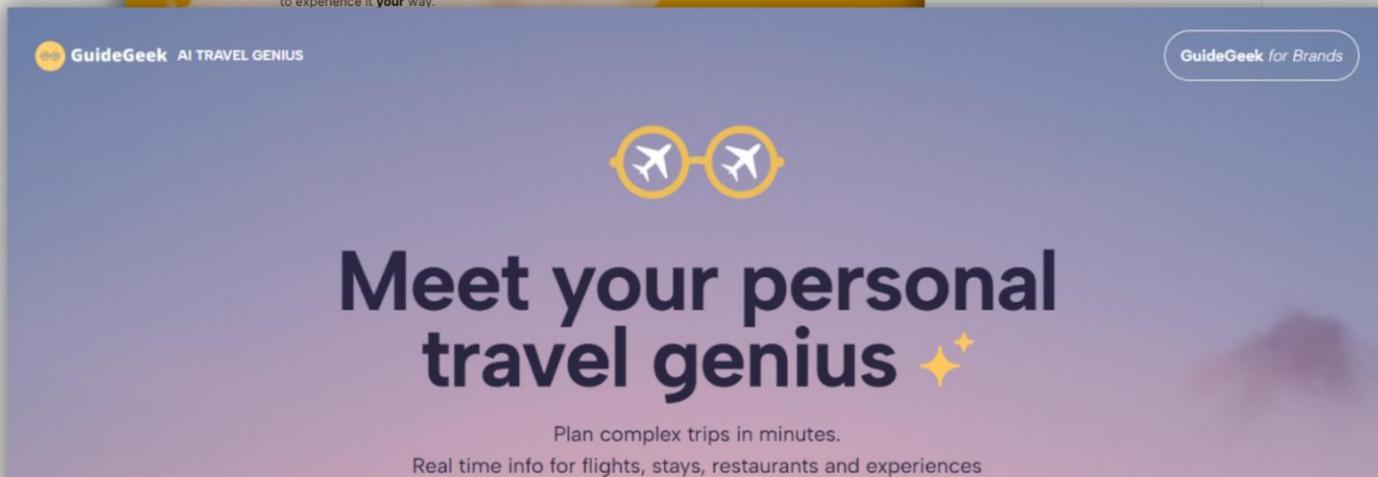
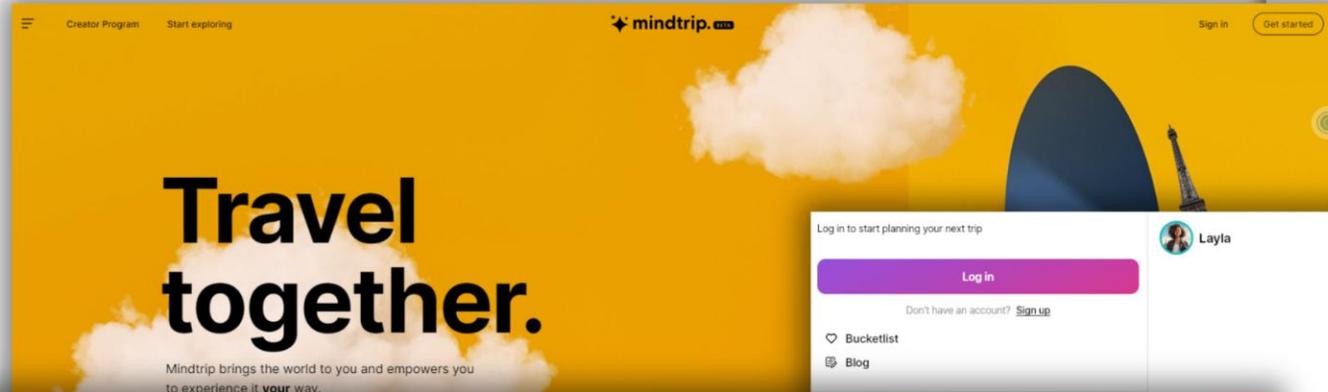
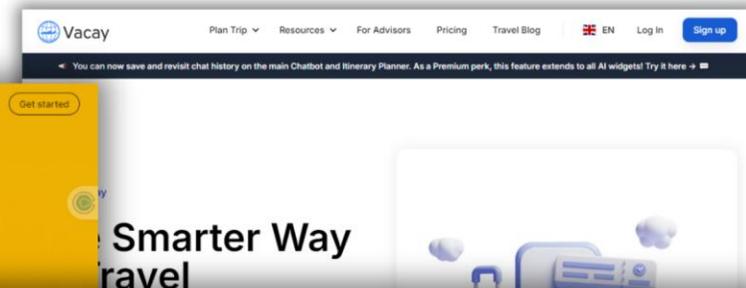
21-40% used AI for their holiday in 2025

1/3 don't want to use AI at all!



AI Itinerary Builders

Letting AI do the work...





Do we have the data?

Opening hours, timetable, reliability, no longer operating?





THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

1 billion+ fewer visits

Wikipedia monthly traffic decline March 22-March 25

Source: DataReportal



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Impact of AI Search

15-64%

drop in organic traffic
for traditional SEO-
only sites

-34%

decline in traditional
web clicks due to AI-
generated snippets

>90%

Google's search
market share dropped
below 90% for first
time since 2015

+40%

visibility increase
for sites using
proper LLMO
techniques



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Everything, everywhere, all the time



**Design websites for
Human AND AI**



**Extensive
detailed FAQs**

(in a conversational
tone)



**Precise, well
structured data**

(Use Schema markup)



**Keep everything up-to-
date and consistent**

(Reviews, Google)



AI for Exploration

Obvlo (Obviously Local)

The screenshot shows the Obvlo website homepage. At the top, there is a dark navigation bar with the Obvlo logo, menu items for 'Use Cases', 'Solutions', and 'Resources', and a 'Get in touch' button. The main content area features the headline 'The solution to scaling your content' with a sub-headline 'Powering inspiration and experience'. Below this, a paragraph explains that the platform empowers brands to build personalized content at scale. A featured section titled 'Cultural Fix' includes a 'Guide' link and a description of London as a world-famous city. It displays four image cards for 'The National Gallery', 'Chinatown', 'London Transport Museum', and 'The Courtauld Gallery'. A second section titled 'Vibrant Markets' is partially visible at the bottom.

The screenshot shows a 'Shop Local' guide page. The header features the title 'Shop Local' and a large image of a stone bridge over a river in a colorful village. The main content includes an 'Introduction' section with a paragraph about shopping experiences in Lochaber and a rating of 4.6/5. A primary recommendation is '1. The Highland Soap Company', with a sub-label 'Retail • Gift Store' and a rating of 3.9/5. A 'Similar Guides' sidebar on the right lists other guides like 'Iconic Photo Spots', 'Top Things to Do', 'Fun Days Out', 'Outdoor Adventures & Nature Trails', and 'Where to Eat, Drink & Stay in the West Highlands'. A partial image of the Highland Soap Company storefront is visible at the bottom.



Social search + AI

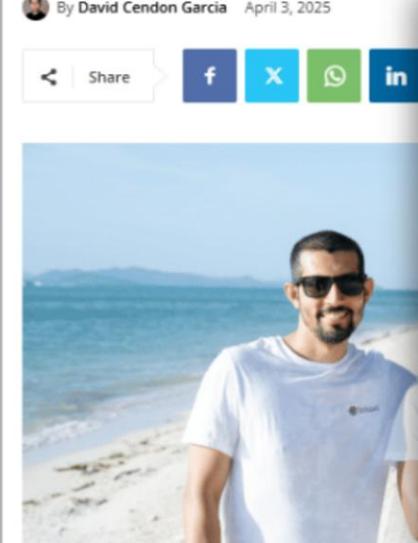
TikTok, YouTube Shorts, Instagram etc.

Home > Funding > "TikTok of Travel": Unravel raises €6.3 million to innovate travel through creator-driven...

Funding UK-Startups

"TikTok of Travel": Unravel raises €6.3 million to innovate travel through creator-driven content

By David Cendon Garcia April 3, 2025



anothertrip Sign in >

Turning travel content into bookable experiences

Helping travel content creators

videreo
Videos, Maps, and Distribution

Videos, Maps, and Distribution for more bookings

Shoppable Videos with interactive map on your travel site in minutes. Videreo is the only platform that tags videos with location data.

Get Started - Free Forever

Yes, it's really free! Here's how.

Examples Pricing Book a Demo

HYPE

**OTAs and Trusted Platforms
secure a dominant position
in AI tools**



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Booking

*Platforms or
personal agents?*



HOPE

**Travellers' AI agents find
and book directly**



AI Agents for Booking

An AI that is given a goal and can pursue that goal autonomously

Artificial intelligence
(AI)

Claude AI tool can now carry out jobs such as filling forms and booking trips, says creator

Anthropic says model is able to carry out computer tasks - as fears mount such technology will replace workers

Dan Milmo
Global technology editor

Wed 23 Oct 2024 12:32 BST



Anthropic, a competitor to ChatGPT owner OpenAI, is making the Claude 3.5 Sonnet model available to developers but admits it can be prone to errors. Photograph: Canadian Press/Rex/Shutterstock

An artificial intelligence startup backed by Amazon and Google says it has created an AI agent that can carry out tasks on the computer such as moving a mouse cursor and typing text.

US company Anthropic said its AI model, called Claude, could now perform computing tasks including filling out forms, planning an outing and building

Skift

News Events Research Advertise Get Access

Travel Technology

Anthropic's New AI Feature Mimics Human Travel Agents

Justin Dumas Skift
October 23rd, 2024 at 2:34 PM EDT



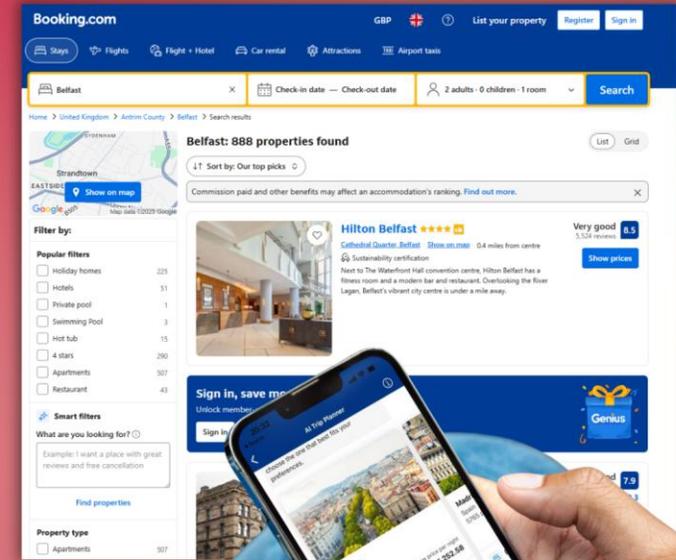


THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Platform AI Innovation

*Smart filters, review summaries
personalised itinerary builders...*

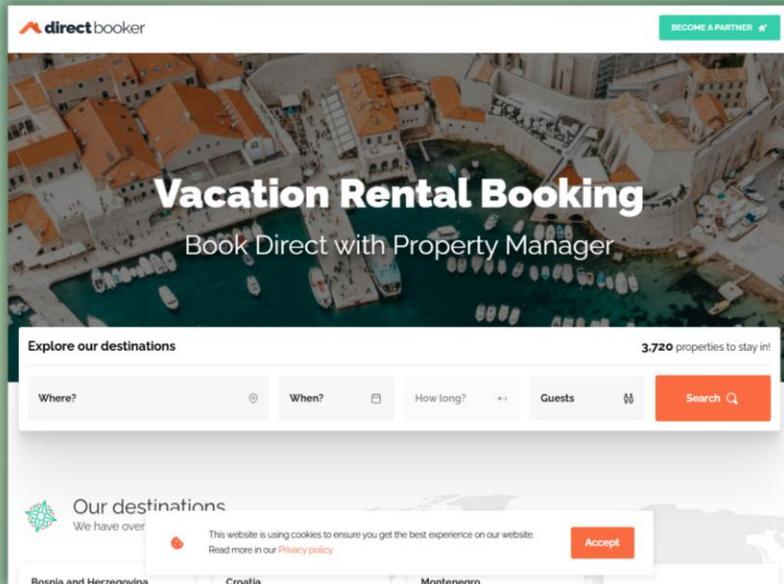


Booking: Platforms or Personal Agents?



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub



Book Direct

Book Local

Booking: *Platforms or Personal Agents?*

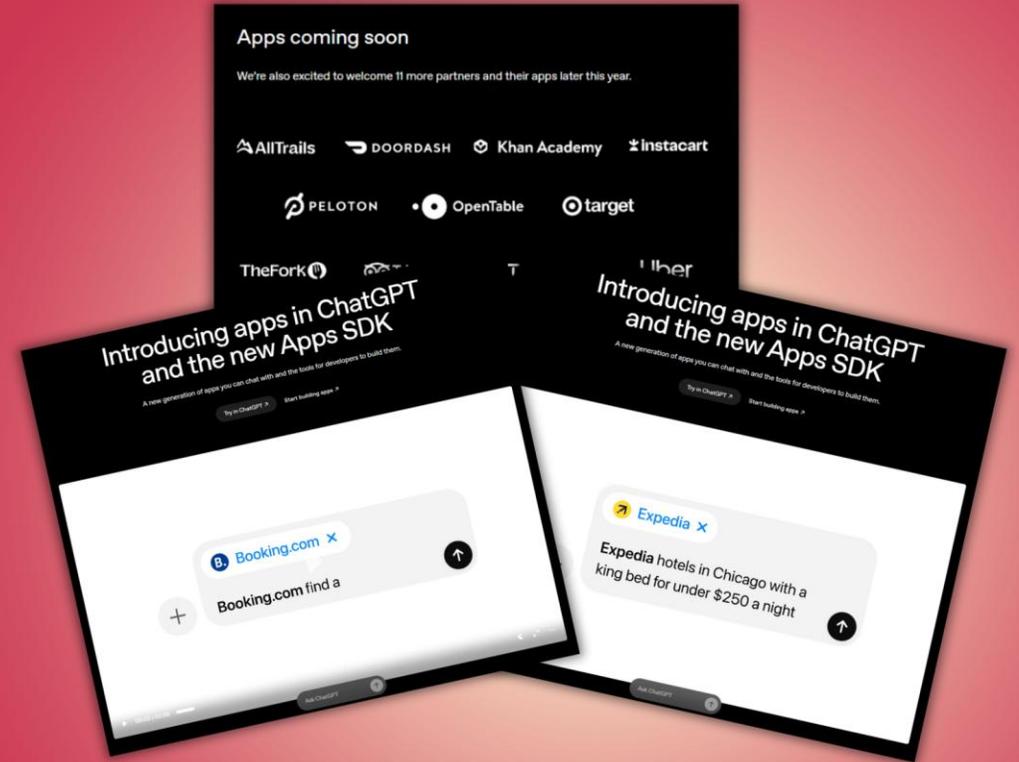


THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Platform Partnerships

ChatGPT Apps just last week!



Booking: *Platforms or Personal Agents?*



Google: Flights, Hotels & Maps

Still, the world's travel app

@Google Flights @Google Hotels @Google Maps

Plan a three-day trip to Budapest, Hungary, for me and ...

Google Flights and 1 more

This is a fantastic plan for a three-day trip to Budapest. Below you will find the flight options, a hotel recommendation, and a suggested day-by-day itinerary, all compiled in an easy-to-read table.

✈ Flights and 🏠 Accommodation

The nearest major airport to Budapest is **Budapest Ferenc Liszt International Airport (BUD)**. Since you did not specify your departure city, I've used **New York (JFK)** as a major hub to provide a realistic sample flight search for a three-day weekend trip (e.g., November 13-16, 2025).

Category	Details	Status
Round-Trip Flights (JFK-BUD)	Best Price Found: \$1,015 USD per person (Total: \$2,030 for two) Cheapest Option Details: 1 stop, 10h 25m duration (SWISS/Lufthansa). Non-stop Flights: Non-stop options from JFK to BUD are rare, and currently none were found in this price range for the sample dates.	Budget Not Met
Hotel Recommendation (4-Star, 3 Nights)	Hotel Name: Duna Garden Hotel Total Stay Price: \$232 USD for 3 nights (for two people) <small>Details: 4.5/5 rating, good transport links, near public</small>	Budget Met



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub



Wearing AI

Potential to help support blind and partially sighted people?



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Chat Interfaces?

New Hardware?



Booking: Platforms or Personal Agents?

HYPE

It's hard to tell real reviews, properties and people from fake...
...trust nothing



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Trust

Can we find the truth amidst all the AI content?



HOPE

We can verify content, only certified sources surface in AI



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Increasingly lifelike

Progress over two years...



Ethan Mollick - One Useful Thing

Trust: *Can we find truth?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

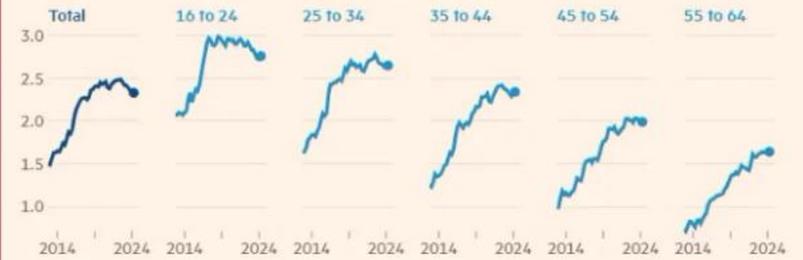
Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Too much content...

The impact AI Slop?

Time on social media peaked in 2022, with young people cutting back first

Average number of hours spent on social media per day



Source: GWJ
FT graphic: John Burn-Murdoch / @burnmurdoch
©FT

John Burn-Murdoch - Financial Times

Trust: *Can we find truth?*

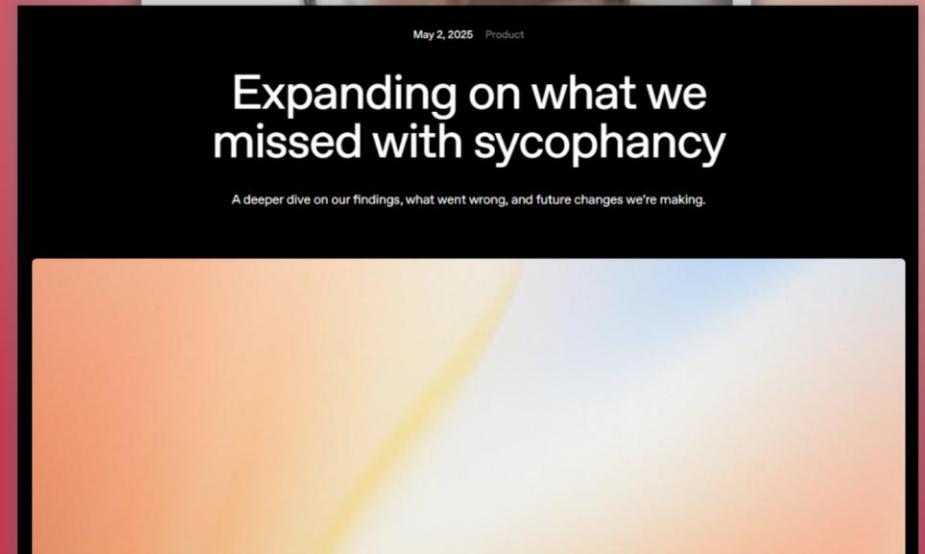


THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

“What a great
idea...”

*Telling you what it thinks you
want to hear...*



Trust: *Can we find truth?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Fake reviews,
hotels, people,
guidebooks...

FAKE!



Trust: *Can we find truth?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Verified
Only

feefo^{ee}

Trust: *Can we find truth?*



THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Ordinary People

What do the celebrities like?

Travel Technology

Musician John Legend Releasing App to Counter 'Negative' Google and Yelp Reviews

Justin Davies | 5 min
October 17th, 2023 at 2:01 PM EDT



**It's
Good.**[™]

Trust: *Can we find truth?*

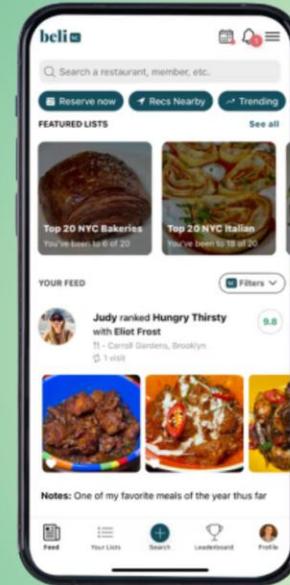


THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Just my network...

Only reviews from those you trust



Trust: *Can we find truth?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Digital ID?

Content Verified?



Trust: *Can we find truth?*

HYPE

**Automation cuts roles, but
also cuts vacancies...
...businesses stay
profitable?**



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Workforce

*Does AI eliminate
jobs or elevate
workers?*



HOPE

**Workers handle creative
and inter-personal tasks.
AI does the boring stuff**



**AI is already
reducing
(some) jobs**

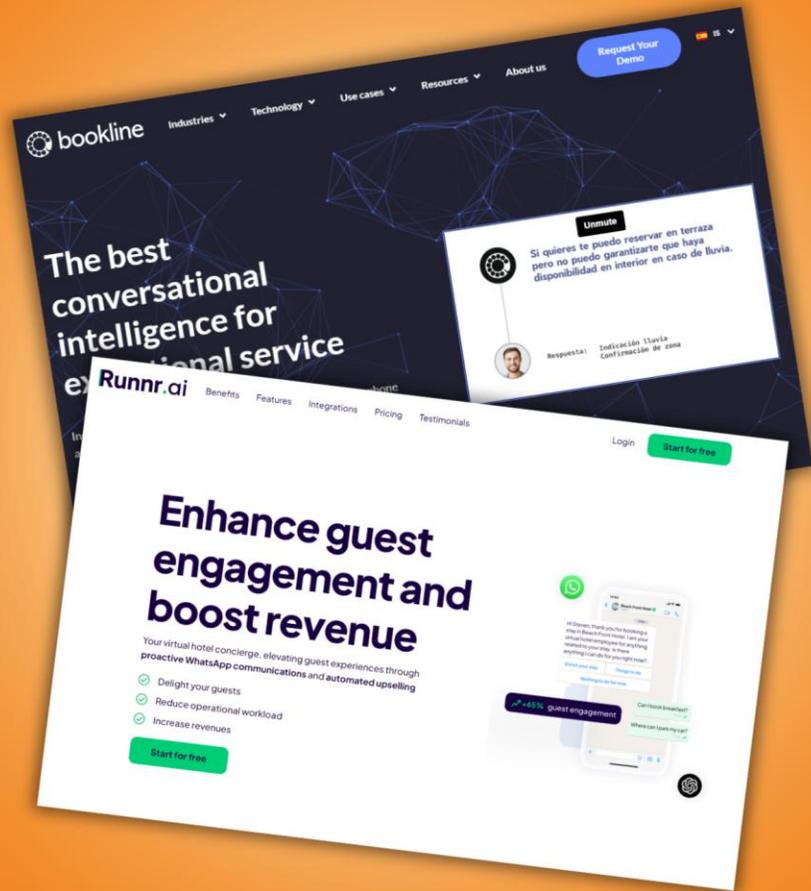


THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Quicker Customer Service

In messaging, voice, or to aid a
human customer service assistant

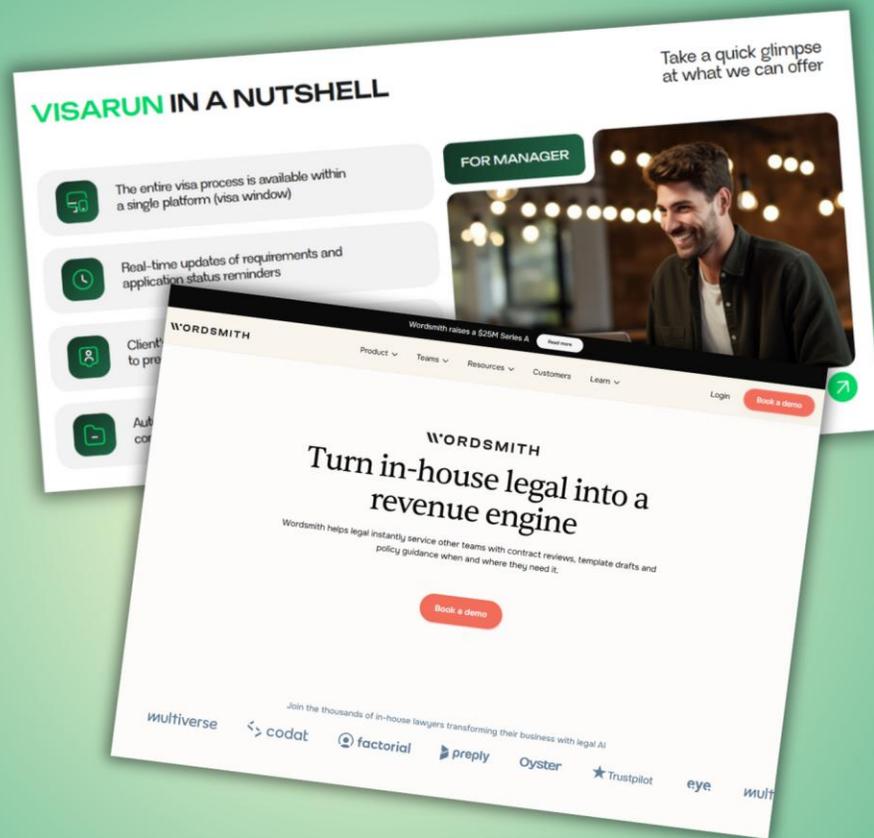


Workforce: *Eliminate or enhance?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub



Quicker Paperwork

AI tools to fill in forms, or even start
your legal drafting...

Workforce: *Eliminate or enhance?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Meet Sidekick, your AI assistant

Your 24/7 Shopify expert that combines commerce knowledge with advanced reasoning and creative problem solving. Sidekick connects your data points to uncover opportunities and deliver insights, while creating content and executing tasks like a pro.

[Sidekick Demo](#)

Achieve more, faster
Sidekick helps with everything from domain setup to metafield management, transforming complex operations into simple, automated workflows.

Level up with sophisticated insights
Sidekick is like a business consultant on your team, able to analyze all your data and operations in real time and provide proactive recommendations.

Ask anything about your business

Skip the report hunting, filter setting, and manual analysis — just ask about your data. Explore questions you've always wondered about and uncover insights that transform how you run your business.

[Learn more](#)

Square AI

What are my gross sales by hour for all of my locations?

Here is a table showing your hourly sales per location:

Items	Tibeca	Santa	Brooklyn
7:00 am	\$874.00	\$698.00	\$334.00
8:00 am	\$1,408.00	\$1,028.00	\$778.00
9:00 am	\$1,448.00	\$1,043.00	\$772.00
10:00 am	\$1,520.00	\$970.00	\$820.00
11:00 am	\$720.00	\$694.00	\$360.00

[Show more](#)

Ask a follow-up question

Running the Analysis

Speak to your data?

Workforce: *Eliminate or enhance?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Chat to your data?

What do you want?





THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub



Using AI to be more human...

Using AI voice interactions to train
front-line hospitality workers

Workforce: *Eliminate or enhance?*



THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Finding the right (and real) candidate

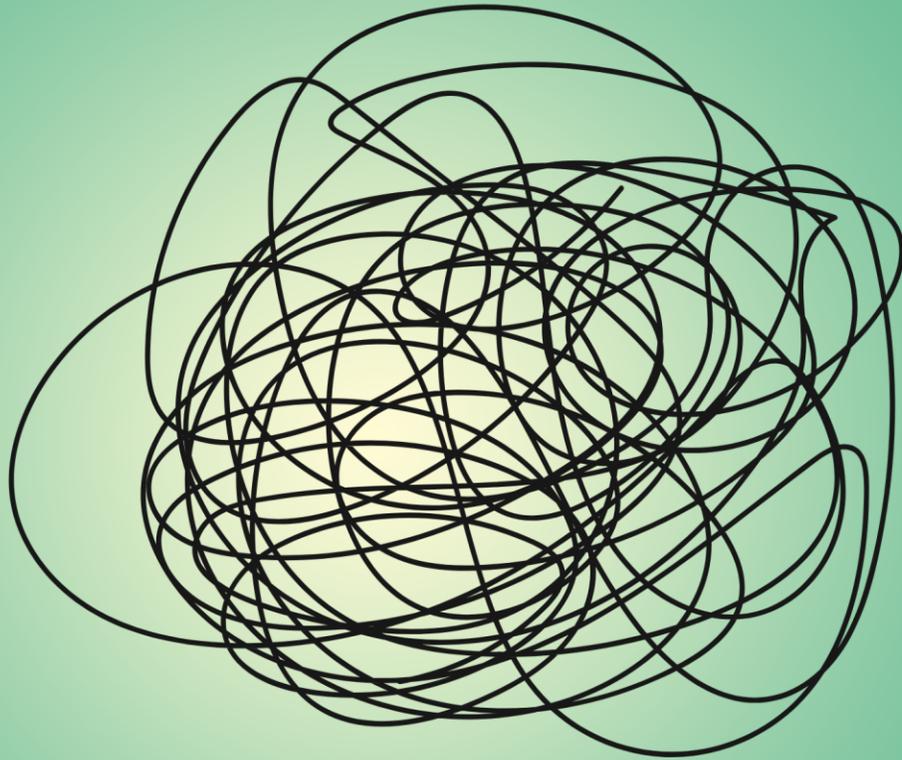


Trust: Can we find truth?



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

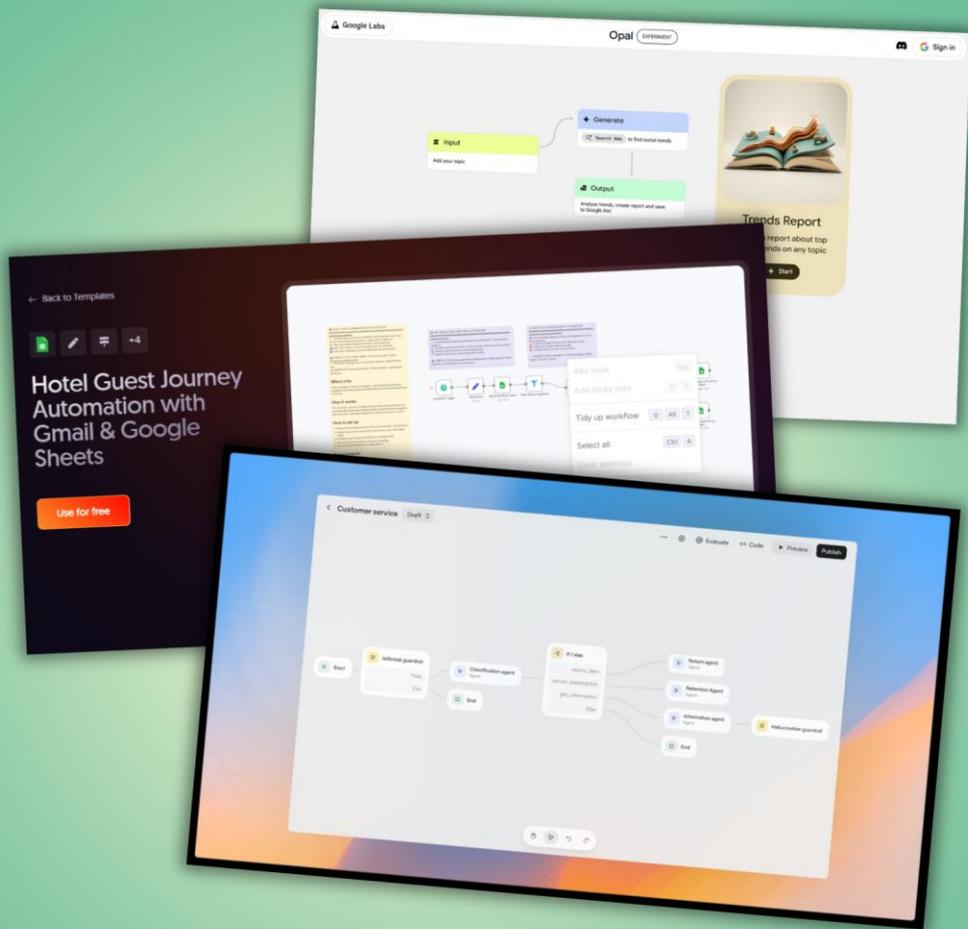
Traveltech
Innovation Hub



Automatic for the people

Automation has never been easier

Workforce: *Eliminate or enhance?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Automatic for the people

Automation has never been easier

Workforce: *Eliminate or enhance?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub



It's not clear what will happen

Radiology is more complex
that we thought...

HYPE

AI-generated content makes every destination sound, look and feel identical



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Authenticity

Does AI homogenise experiences or support authenticity?



HOPE

AI lets us create authentic experiences that makes the visit special



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub



 **r/Scotland** • 1 yr. ago
_fuzzyorangesock

What is up with all the AI "art" in souvenir shops?

Question

Over the past week we've been in Inverness, Portree, Fort William, Oban, and Glasgow and in almost every single city there are souvenir shops that have this god-awful AI art for sale.

It's all highland cows smoking cigars or drinking whisky and household dogs and cats on the toilet?? And it's all the same in every store, in the exact same style, in the exact same frames.

What is up with this?? And who is buying it??

So many AI
souvenirs

Authenticity: *Same or new?*



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Algorithmic Homogeneity



WeWork's co-working space on Hudson Street, New York. Photograph: Katelyn Perry/WeWork/PA



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub



Real AI Art Heart Space

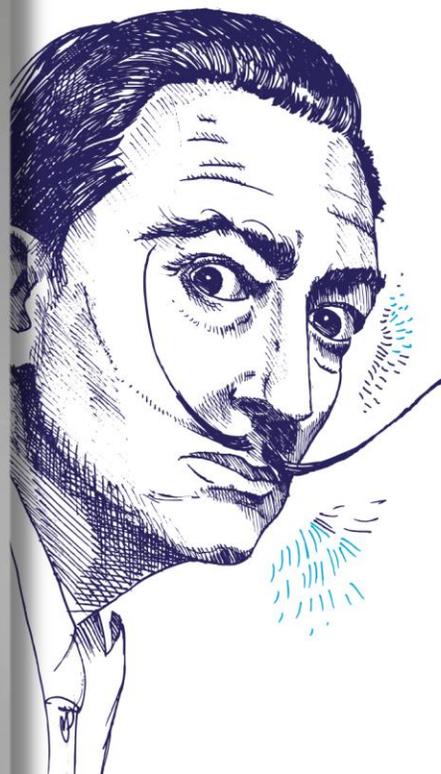
Using visitors individual data for a
collective experience

Authenticity: *Same or New?*



Dial Dali

Ask Dali anything you want





THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub



Talking to History

Dialogue with Frederick Douglass

Workforce: *Eliminate or enhance?*



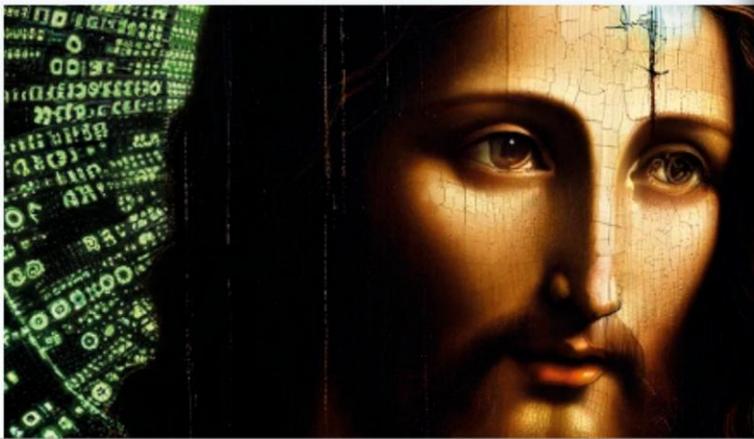
The voice of God?



August 14, 2024

DEUS IN MACHINA

When was the last time you went to the confessional? Did you have stressful experiences? Now you can relive it and share your thoughts and questions with a heavenly hologram.





THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

Serendipity & Spontaneity

Can AI optimise for a good time?



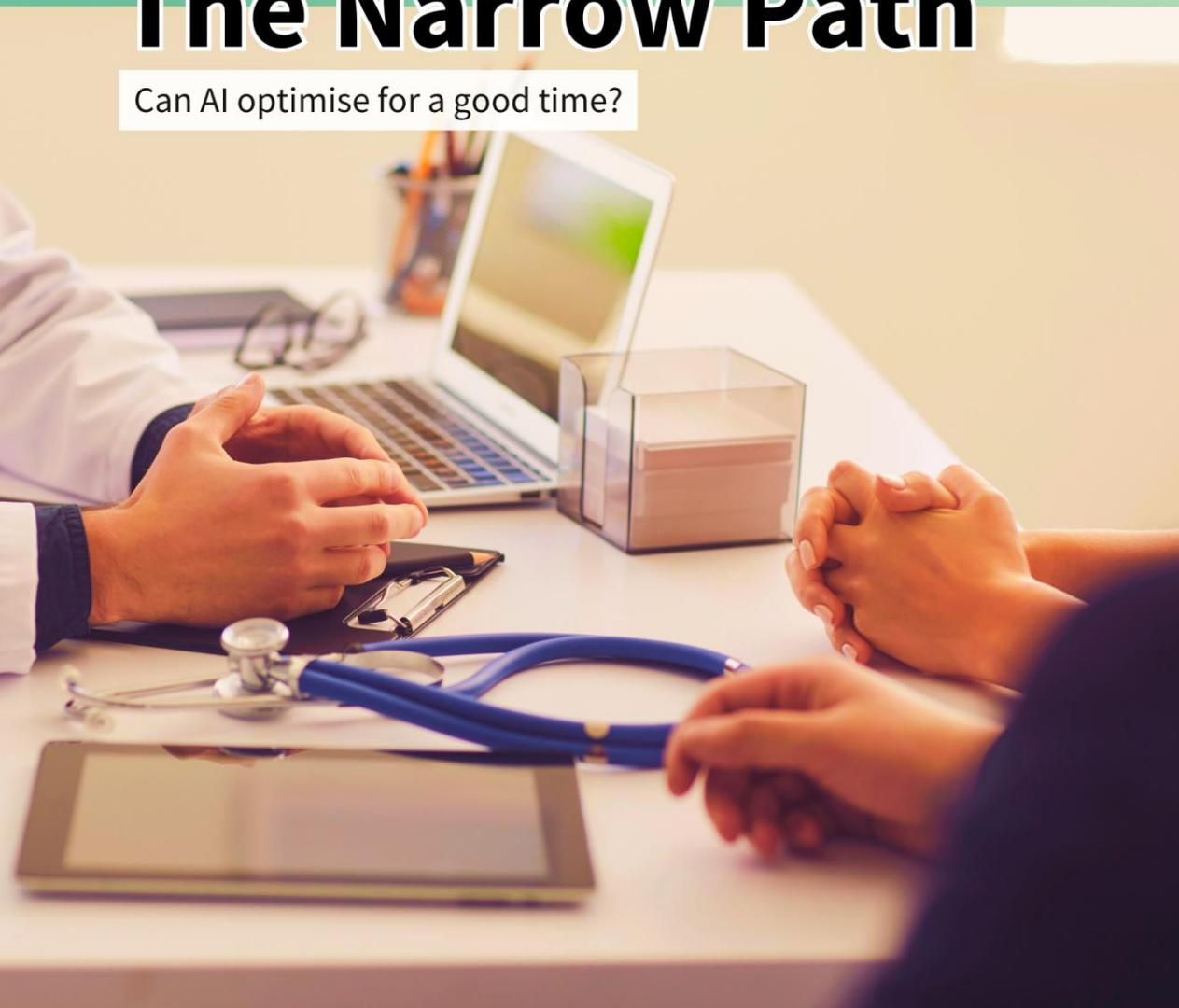


THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

The Narrow Path

Can AI optimise for a good time?



A monochromatic, grayscale image featuring a crystal ball in the center. The letters "AI" are prominently displayed in a bold, sans-serif font within the crystal ball. The background is a blurred scene of a person sitting and reading a newspaper. The overall aesthetic is futuristic and contemplative, suggesting the theme of artificial intelligence and its future.

AI



Future?



**We have agency.
to shape it**



Discovery

Make your data and websites machine-readable now.

Booking

Build direct booking capabilities with partners.

Trust

Become a verified source. AI agents will only recommend trusted.

Workforce

Automate the boring, elevate the human. Free yourself repetitive tasks to focus on what guests remember.

Authenticity

Play with AI. Create experiences that are true to what you're about.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub

UK's Centre for Traveltech Innovation

Work with over 200 Traveltech businesses...

Challenge. Create. Change.





THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh Futures Institute

Traveltech
Innovation Hub



Joshua Ryan-Saha

joshua.ryan-saha@ei.ed.ac.uk

www.efi.ac.uk