

Being Found and Booked in the Age of AI: a workbook for Northern Ireland tourism businesses

Oct 1, 2026

The workbook at a glance

The seven sections and the actions in each are listed here so you can see the whole plan on one page. Tick each action off as you complete it.

Section 1: What has changed and why it matters

- Update your profile on every booking platform you use, including text, photos, opening times and availability
- Check Google Analytics to see how many visitors arrive from AI tools such as ChatGPT and Gemini
- Ask your booking system provider how they are preparing for AI-led bookings

Section 2: Check how AI sees your business

- Run the prompts in Section 2 in Google AI Mode, ChatGPT and one other tool
- Write down the gaps the AI tools found in your information
- Decide which gaps to fix on your website, your listings and your reviews

Section 3: Fix the information AI reads about you

- Update your website with the practical details visitors ask for, including prices, times and policies
- Check that your name, address, opening hours and prices match on every platform
- Register with Bing Webmaster Tools and look at the AI Performance report
- Complete or update your Discover Northern Ireland and council listings
- Collect reviews and reply to everyone
- Ask your web developer/hosting company whether your site blocks AI tools from reading it - ideally it does not

Section 4: What visitors will carry

- Check that your business is correctly placed and named on Google Maps
- Decide how you will welcome visitors using live translation on their phones - have one app ready for you and your team to use. Know how to use this - when you will need it.

Section 5: Set up your AI tools properly

- Turn off data sharing in the settings of every AI tool you use
- Fill in the profile or custom instructions so the tool knows your business
- Set up one scheduled task, such as a weekly news summary for your sector

- Write a one-page AI policy for your business before connecting any AI tool to email or bookings. Or check any existing policy - always seek permission from the IT owner in your business.

Section 6: Stay safe

- Brief your team on AI-made scam emails, calls and video calls
- Agree a rule that no payment or password is ever changed on the strength of a single call or email
- Work through the free NCSC Cyber Action Toolkit

Section 7: Your action plan

- Fill in the action plan table with an owner and a date for each action you choose

Section 1: What has changed and why it matters

Visitors are starting to plan and book through AI tools instead of clicking through websites. The four links in this section show how far that has gone and why the information you publish about your business now matters more than it did a year ago.

Google now takes hotel bookings inside AI Mode

Link: [Google: Book travel with AI Mode](#)

On 27 August 2026 Google announced that AI Mode (the conversational version of Google Search) can take a visitor from a question such as "find me a quiet hotel near the coast for three nights" through to a paid booking without leaving Google. The booking is made through partners including Booking.com, Expedia, Hotels.com and Trip.com. At the time of writing it is available in the United States in English, so your American guests may already be using it. Flight price tracking in AI Mode is already available in the UK.

Your action: open every booking platform you are listed on and update the description, photos, opening times, prices and availability. If you cannot remember the last time you did this, that is the answer. AI tools only recommend businesses whose information they trust, and out-of-date listings lose that trust.

More than a billion people a month use Google AI Mode

Link: [AI Mode usage tracker](#)

At its I/O event in May 2026, Google said AI Mode had passed one billion monthly users, with the number of questions asked more than doubling every three months. ChatGPT reported 900 million weekly users in February 2026. Many people use AI search without realising it, because the AI answer now appears at the top of an ordinary Google search.

Your action: open Google Analytics for your website and look at where your visitors come from. Look for ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot and Perplexity in the list of referring sites. If you are not sure how to find this, ask whoever looks after your website to show you once, and check it monthly after that.

People click fewer links when an AI answer appears

Link: [Pew Research Center: Google users are less likely to click on links when an AI summary appears](#)

In a study of 900 adults in the United States, people clicked a normal search result on 8% of visits when an AI summary appeared, compared with 15% when it did not. General questions such as "things to do on the Causeway Coast" are now answered on the search page itself. Your website still gets clicks for the things only you can answer: availability, prices, whether dogs are welcome, parking and how to book.

Your action: do not panic if your website traffic has fallen while enquiries have held steady. That pattern is now common. Judge your website on enquiries and bookings, and spend your effort on the pages that answer practical questions rather than general destination information.

Google is preparing for AI to book on the visitor's behalf

Link: [Search Engine Journal: Google plans to adopt UCP draft spec for AI Mode hotel booking](#)

Today the visitor still chooses the room, checks the cancellation terms and approves payment. Google is backing a shared technical standard that would let AI tools read live availability, prices and terms directly from booking systems. It is early, but the direction is clear: the systems need accurate, live data from your booking software.

Your action: email or call your booking system provider and ask one question: "How are you preparing for AI tools that book on behalf of guests?" Their answer tells you whether your system will be ready or whether you need to plan a change over the next year or two.

Section 2: Check how AI sees your business

The fastest way to find out whether AI tools would recommend you is to ask them. This section gives you the prompts used in the session, adapted so you can run them for your own business, and a simple method for turning the answers into a fix list.

Link: [Google AI Mode](#) (also try [ChatGPT](#), [Claude](#), [Gemini](#) and [Perplexity](#))

How to run the test

1. Pick two or three tools. Google AI Mode and ChatGPT are the two most visitors use, so start there.
2. Run each prompt twice: once logged in to your own account and once logged out or in a private browser window. Logged-in answers are shaped by your history; logged-out answers are closer to what a stranger sees.
3. Copy the answers into a document. Do not rely on memory, because the answers change from day to day.
4. Note every point where the AI is wrong about you, vague about you, or does not mention you at all.

The prompts

Replace the words in square brackets with your own details. Keep the rest of the wording as it is.

Prompt 1: the visitor's question. "I am travelling from [Boston] with [my wife] for [four] nights in Northern Ireland in [late October], staying around [your area]. Suggest a day-by-day plan with places to stay, eat and visit, suitable for [a couple who enjoy walking and local food]." Write this the way a real visitor would, and ask for recommendations. The point is to see whether you appear and what is said about you.

Prompt 2: what the AI needs from you. "If you were recommending a [small self-catering cottage] in [your area] to [a family travelling with a dog], what information would you need to find on its website and listings to recommend it with confidence? What information is usually missing?" This was the strongest result in the session: the answer is a checklist of what your website should contain.

Prompt 3: how sure the AI is about you. "How confident are you about the opening hours and prices of [type of business] in [your area] in winter, and where does that information come from?" The answer tells you which websites and platforms the AI trusts. Make sure you are listed on them and that your details match everywhere.

Prompt 4: your improvement plan. "Based on your last answers, what are the five most useful things a [type of business] in [your area] could do this month so that you would describe and recommend it with more confidence?"

Prompt 5: what visitors ask. "What questions do [American] visitors most often ask when planning a first trip to [your area of Northern Ireland]?"

Prompt 6: what to answer on your own site. "Based on those questions, which ones should a [type of business] answer on its own website, given that destination websites already cover the general ones? Give me a short list and the reason for each."

Prompt 7: check your own page. Paste in the text from your main booking or product page, then ask: "A visitor is asking an AI tool to recommend a [type of business] in [your area] for [type of visitor]. Based only on this page, what can you say about this business with confidence, what would you be unsure about, and what is missing?"

Turning the answers into a fix list

Make a simple table with three columns: the gap the AI found, where you will fix it (website, Google Business Profile, booking platform, Discover Northern Ireland listing, social media) and the date you will do it by. Fix the gaps in this order: wrong information first, missing practical details second, and extra content third.

Two warnings from the session. Only add commercial content, meaning information that helps someone decide to book with you. General destination information, such as the history of the Giant's Causeway, is already covered by bigger websites and will not make an AI tool recommend you. And keep the content dated and fresh: if your last update says May and a visitor is asking in October, the AI tool will prefer a business that has updated more recently.

Section 3: Fix the information AI reads about you

Three things decide whether an AI tool recommends a business: the right content on your own website, reviews on the platform's visitors trust, and accurate listings on high-authority sites. Everything in this section serves one of those three.

Google's own advice: there is no special trick

Link: [Google Search Central: AI features and your website](#)

Google states that there are no additional requirements to appear in AI Overviews or AI Mode. You do not need a special AI file, new code or paid "AI optimisation". Google's list of what helps is the same as it has always been: useful content in text form, good photos and video, and an up-to-date Business Profile.

Your action: Spend money and time on photography, video and on updating your pages instead of buying expensive AI visibility tools or fixes.

Step 1: put the right content on your website

This is the question raised at the end of the session, so here it is in full. For every product you sell, whether a room, a tour, a table or an experience, check that the page answers the questions guests ask you by phone and email. For a tour that means:

- What time it starts and finishes, and how long it takes
- Where it starts, where it stops and the route
- Departure dates for the season
- Prices, including what is and is not included
- Who it suits, including ages, fitness level, group size and languages
- What makes it different from similar tours
- What happens if it rains, and the cancellation policy
- Original photos of real guests on the tour, with the date they were taken

For accommodation, add check-in and late arrival arrangements, parking, whether dogs are welcome and on what terms, accessibility details, breakfast and dietary options, and distance to the main attractions.

Your action: write the answers to your ten most common questions on the relevant product page or on a questions page that links to it. Put prices on the site. If you do not want prices on your home page, put them on a dedicated page; the AI tools read every page, not just the first one. Date your updates, because AI tools and search engines can see when a page last changed.

Step 2: collect reviews and reply to every one

AI tools trust your own website to a point, but they trust fifty guests talking about you more. Reviews on Google, Tripadvisor and your booking platforms are read by AI tools and quoted back to visitors.

Your action: build asking for a review into your checkout or departure routine, send the same neutral request to every guest, and reply to every review within a week. In April 2026 Google tightened its rules on how reviews are collected, so ask for honest reviews and never offer anything in return for a positive one.

Step 3: keep your listings accurate and identical everywhere

The most common mistake seen across Northern Ireland businesses is different details on different platforms: one opening time on Google, another on Facebook, a third on the website. Every mismatch lowers the AI tool's confidence, and a business the AI is unsure about is not recommended.

Your action: write your name, address, phone number, opening hours, seasonal hours and starting prices on one sheet of paper. Check them against your website, Google Business Profile, Facebook and Instagram, every booking platform, your Discover Northern Ireland listing and any council or local tourism site.

Your Google Business Profile is becoming an AI tool

Link: [Google: Save time and grow your business with new Gemini tools](#)

Google announced in June 2026 that business owners can connect their Google Business Profile to Gemini, Google's AI assistant, so it knows the business and can help with tasks such as replying to customers and drafting posts. It also adds Business notebooks for keeping tasks and business

information in one place. Check whether the option appears in your Gemini app yet, because it is rolling out gradually.

Your action: before the AI help arrives, make the profile worth connecting. Update hours and special hours, fill in every attribute that applies to you, add ten recent photos, and post an update at least monthly. The same profile Gemini uses to help you is the one Google's AI uses to describe you to visitors.

Bing Webmaster Tools: a free view of your AI visibility

Link: [Bing Webmaster Tools](#)

Microsoft Copilot runs on Bing, and Bing Webmaster Tools has an AI Performance report showing how often your pages are referenced in Copilot and ChatGPT, which questions prompted it and which pages were used. It is free, and you can sign in with your existing Google Search Console account to import your site in minutes. The pages that matter most for AI visibility are often not the ones that bring the most human visitors, so check before deleting any page.

Your action: register today, open the AI Performance report, and note the three pages most often referenced by AI tools. Protect and improve those pages.

Discover Northern Ireland and council listings

Links: [Tourism NI: accommodation advice and next steps](#) and [Tourism NI: marketing your product](#)

When the AI tools in the session were asked where they get their information, they named the official and high-authority sites. A free Discover Northern Ireland listing is automatically included on Tourism Ireland's [ireland.com](#) within 48 hours, and can be shared with local councils and partner sites, so one accurate listing feeds several of the sources AI tools read.

Your action: check that your Discover Northern Ireland listing exists, is complete, has current photos and matches your website word for word on hours and prices. Then check your local council's tourism site in the same way.

Bots: let the good ones in and keep the bad ones out

Link: [Cloudflare: Precursor, one-click behavioural defence against modern bots](#)

Cloudflare, which protects a large share of the world's websites, reported in July 2026 that automated bots now make up roughly 57% of all web requests. Some bots are harmful: they scrape prices, abuse booking forms and push up hosting costs. Others are the AI tools and search engines that read your pages so they can recommend you. Some hosting and security settings block AI tools by default, and you will not know unless you check.

Your action: ask whoever looks after your website one question: "Is our site set up to block harmful bots while still letting Google, ChatGPT and other AI tools read our pages?" For a business that wants bookings, the answer should be yes.

Section 4: What visitors will carry

Over the next year more of your visitors will arrive with AI in their glasses, their earbuds and their maps. None of this needs new equipment on your side; it needs your business to be easy for a machine to find, name and describe.

AI glasses

Links: [Engadget: everything announced at Meta Connect 2026](#) and the short demonstration video shown in the session: [YouTube](#)

Meta's Ray-Ban Display glasses are on sale in the UK from £749 and show directions, messages and translations on the lens. The glasses can give directions by telling the wearer to turn at a landmark in front of them rather than at a street name. The cheaper Ray-Ban Meta Gen 3 has a button that calls up Meta AI, so a visitor can ask about what they are looking at. At large events this summer roughly one person in seventy was seen wearing a version of these glasses, so they are still rare, but no longer unusual.

Your action: check that your business is correctly placed on Google Maps and Apple Maps, with the right pin, the right name and clear photos of the entrance. If a visitor's glasses are telling them to turn at your building, the building has to be recognisable.

Live translation in any headphones

Link: [TechCrunch: Google Translate's real-time headphone translation expands to iOS and more countries](#)

Since March 2026, Google Translate's Live Translate works in the UK on both Android and iPhone, through any pair of headphones, in more than 70 languages. A French or German guest can listen to your welcome talk or menu explanation in their own language without any equipment from you. The same update took Google's camera-based Search Live worldwide, so a visitor can point a phone at a sign, a menu or a building and ask questions about it.

Your action: make the words a visitor would hear or photograph easy to translate. Keep menus, signs and welcome boards in plain English with no slang, and test one by pointing your own phone's Google app at it. If it reads well in English, it will translate well.

Google Maps is becoming a conversation

Link: [Google: Ask Maps and immersive navigation](#)

Ask Maps lets a visitor describe a whole trip in plain words and get a planned route built from Google Maps profiles, reviews and photos. It launched in the United States first. The old question-and-answer section on business profiles has reportedly been retired in favour of this AI answer, so the profile, the reviews and your website are now the source of every answer about you.

Your action: read your own Google Business Profile as a stranger would. If a visitor asked "is this place suitable for a wheelchair user and does it have parking?", would the profile answer it? If not, add the attribute, the photo and a sentence in the description today.

Section 5: Set up your AI tools properly

Most people in the session use ChatGPT, and most have never opened its settings. Ten minutes in the settings of whichever tool you use will protect your data and make every answer more relevant to your business. Menu names change often, so if a label below has moved, look for the words privacy, data, personalisation or memory.

Three settings to change in every tool

Setting	ChatGPT	Claude	Gemini
Where to find settings	Click your name or picture at the bottom left, then Settings	Click your name or picture at the bottom left, then Settings	Click your picture at the top right, or the menu at the top left
Turn off data sharing (your chats are not used to train the model)	Settings, then Data controls, then switch off "Improve the model for everyone"	Settings, then Privacy, then switch off "Help improve Claude"	Settings, then Gemini Apps Activity, then turn activity off or set it to auto-delete
Tell the tool about your business	Settings, then Personalisation, then Custom instructions	Settings, then Profile, then the preferences box	Settings, then Saved info

Your action: fill in the "about you" box with five lines: what your business is, where it is, who your guests are, how you want the tool to write (plain English, UK spelling, no exclamation marks) and anything it must never do, such as inventing prices. Every answer from then on starts from that context.

Scheduled tasks: your first simple automation

In ChatGPT the feature is called Tasks and in Claude it is called Scheduled tasks; both sit in the left-hand menu. You describe what you want and how often, and the tool runs it and sends the result by email, by notification or into the app.

The simplest version needs nothing connected. Ask for a weekly summary of tourism news in Northern Ireland, or of what is being said about your area, every Monday at 8am. A braver version, once your email or calendar is connected, is a morning brief: "Read the emails that arrived between 5pm yesterday and 8am today, list the ones that need a reply in order of urgency, and show me today's calendar." The tool can also draft replies for you to check and send yourself.

Your action: set up one scheduled task this week, starting with the news summary. Judge it after a month: if you read it, keep it; if you do not, delete it.

Connectors: joining your AI tool to your email, calendar and files

In Claude this is under Settings and then Connectors. In ChatGPT it is under Settings and then Connectors, with a separate Apps section for services such as Expedia and Booking.com. Email, calendar and cloud drives (Google Drive, OneDrive, Dropbox) are the connections most small businesses find useful, because they let the tool read enquiries, check availability in your calendar and find your own documents.

Connecting a tool to your inbox means the tool can read guest names, emails and booking details. That is fine if you have decided it is, and not fine if you have drifted into it. If your business uses Microsoft 365 with Copilot and your IT provider has locked the settings, do not try to work around that.

Your action: before connecting anything, write a one-page AI policy for your business. It needs to say which tools staff may use, which may be connected to email, calendars and bookings, what guest information may never be pasted into a free AI tool, and who decides. If you are the owner, that person is you, and the page can be written in half an hour.

A note on paid versus free accounts

Scheduled tasks and connectors are generally features of paid plans. A free account is enough for the prompts in Section 2 and for drafting replies and posts. Upgrade only when you have a task that needs it, and check the plan comparison page of the tool you choose, because prices and limits change regularly.

Section 6: Stay safe

AI has made it cheap to attack small businesses that criminals once ignored. In the last few months Profile Tree has seen more AI-written scam emails, fake websites and impersonation attempts aimed at small businesses than in any previous period. The defences are mostly habits and free tools rather than spending.

Deepfake scams are already here

Link: the short video shown in the session: [YouTube](#)

The case in the video dates from early 2024. A finance worker at the Hong Kong office of a British engineering firm joined a video call with what appeared to be the company's chief financial officer and several colleagues, all of them AI-generated from publicly available footage, and transferred around 25 million US dollars on their instruction. The technology has become far easier to use since then, and a scammer needs only a photo and a short voice clip from a website or social media. A second clip shown in the session, made with an AI video tool, placed a convincing fake face over a real recording in minutes.

Your action: agree one rule with your team today: no payment, bank detail change, password reset or gift card purchase is ever made on the strength of a single email, call or video call, however senior the person appears. Confirm by calling back on a number you already hold. Brief seasonal and part-time staff on this as part of their induction.

Free help from the NI Cyber Security Centre

Link: [NI Cyber Security Centre: tools and services for small organisations](#)

This is the local starting point. The page lists the free NCSC Cyber Action Toolkit, which is designed for sole traders and small organisations, and explains Cyber Essentials, the certification the NCSC recommends as the minimum standard for every organisation.

Your action: work through the Cyber Action Toolkit this month. It takes an hour and gives you a short, personalised list of fixes. Treat Cyber Essentials as the check to complete before you connect any AI tool to your email, bookings or payments.

The NCSC Small Business Guide

Link: [NCSC: Small Business Guide](#)

The guide covers backups, malware, phones and tablets, passwords and phishing in plain English, and most of its actions cost nothing.

Your action: pick the two sections that worry you most and complete their actions. Passwords and phishing are the two that matter most for a business handling bookings and card payments.

Guest data and AI tools

UK data protection law still applies when you use AI. Guest names, contact details, card details and anything about health or dietary needs should not be pasted into a free AI tool. Paid business plans generally offer stronger commitments on how data is handled, but you need to read them.

Your action: add one line to your AI policy from Section 5: "No guest personal data goes into an AI tool unless the owner has approved that tool and that use." For anything beyond that, the Information Commissioner's Office website has guidance written for small organisations, and your accountant or solicitor can point you to specialist advice if you need it.

Section 7: Your action plan

Choose the actions that fit your business, give each one an owner and a date, and keep this table where you will see it. The first five rows are suggested starting points; add your own below them.

Action	Section	Owner	Date	Done
Run the seven prompts and write down the gaps	2			
Update the main product page with times, prices, policies and dated photos	3			
Check name, hours and prices match on every platform	3			
Register with Bing Webmaster Tools and read the AI Performance report	3			
Turn off data sharing and fill in the profile in your AI tool	5			
Agree the no-single-call payment rule with the team	6			

If you do only three things

1. Ask ChatGPT and Google AI Mode about your area as a visitor would, and note whether you appear and whether the details are right.
2. Fix your Google Business Profile and your Discover Northern Ireland listing so they match your website exactly.
3. Add a page or section to your website that answers the ten questions guests ask you most often, with prices and dates.

Further viewing

The Tourism NI YouTube channel holds the earlier training sessions. The one recommended in this session is [AI Check In: Transform Your Analytics with AI, From Data to Decisions](#), which shows how to use AI to understand the data already in your business. If you watched it earlier in the year, it is worth a second viewing now that you have the actions above.