

Would you let AI plan your next holiday?

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Suzanne Bearne - Technology Reporter



Jason Brown was happy with the AI input into his holiday to Ireland

When Jason Brown organised his summer holiday to Amsterdam and Ireland this year, he didn't turn to a travel book or check out Instagram.

Instead, the founder of recruitment company People Movers consulted ChatGPT, Open AI's generative artificial intelligence tool.

He asked the AI a range of questions to help plan an itinerary to Amsterdam and Ireland, including Dublin and Galway, for his 10-day trip in July and August this year with his wife, two sons aged 20 and 16, and one of their son's friends.

"In the past I have always used sites such as TripAdvisor, but I realised I had all the knowledge at my fingertips [through AI] and it spits it out in 15 seconds." He describes the experience as "fantastic".

"It provided me with a golf itinerary for Dublin, and a four-day itinerary for elsewhere in Ireland. It was amazing that it split it into morning, afternoon and evening.

"For example, on the first day it suggested arriving in the morning, spending the afternoon at Trinity College and Grafton Street, and then Temple Bar on the evening." For Amsterdam, he says it reeled off the highlights such as the Anne Frank Museum, Van Gogh Museum and the Jordaan neighbourhood. As the trip evolved so did his queries on ChatGPT.

While he took up many of the AI suggestions, Mr Brown says he still relied on word of mouth recommendations through an online community of people who attended the same college as his, while a friend they visited in Amsterdam showed them around.

"That way we experienced a few things we wouldn't have found using ChatGPT. But it gives a perfect skeleton of a trip and gives you everything you need and want to see."

AI is pervading all areas of our life and travel is no different. As well as ChatGPT there are other generative AI tools such as Google's Gemini, Microsoft's Copilot, and dedicated travel AI sites such as Trip Planner and Ask Layla.

It appears to be becoming part of the travel organisation plans for some, with one in 10 Britons having used AI for travel planning, [according to a survey](#) by Sainsbury's Bank Travel Money. One in five said they are likely to use it in the future.

However, the study also suggested that travel AI still has some way to go before it can take on all your holiday plans.

It found that of those who had used AI for travel planning, more than a third (38%) said that it brought up generic answers, 37% said it had missing information, while 30% said it had incorrect information.

While generative AI can help deliver personalised travel itineraries and recommendations, it is only as good as the information it is trained on, and where this information is out of date, biased, erroneous, false and so on, then the AI will perpetuate the misinformation, points out Caroline Bremmer, head of travel and tourism research at analysts Euromonitor International.

"The challenge is ensuring real-time information that is factually correct. There are dangers if consumers do not undertake due diligence to verify the results provided by Gen AI with other sources, including talking to people in the know, such as local residents or travel agents."



Sardar Bali co-founded an AI travel planner called Just Ask Layla

Sardar Bali is the co-founder at Berlin-based AI travel planner and guide Just Ask Layla.

He says accuracy is a key part the service.

"We have internal tools," says Bali. "All content goes through a two-step verification process, one of which is more automated, and we have a more manual process where internal teams look at different content and researches it a bit."

But he admits some content "might slip through".

"For example, it once mentioned an Eiffel Tower in Beijing; it might be tagged incorrectly. But it's getting better and better every day."

That improvement is likely to come, particularly as more services come online.

Earlier this year, travel giant Expedia launched an AI service for US customers. Called Romie, it's part of the company's iPhone app.

"A trip can involve complex planning... there's gazillions of options," says Shiyi Pickrell, senior vice president of data and AI at Expedia Group.

She says Romie can help narrow down the choice of destination and compare different locations. If you want a beach theme, it can compare British beach destinations to Spain and France for example or look at which ones are family friendly.



Rebecca Crowe is cautious after some dodgy AI recommendations

However, AI doesn't always go to plan.

Rebecca Crowe, 29, a freelance writer living in Liverpool, says she often taps into AI to help plan her trips, but proceeds with caution after several unhelpful experiences including a trip to Lecco, a town located next to Lake Como in Italy.

"The experience wasn't great," says Crowe. "It listed all the popular stuff to do that you'd find with a standard Google search, and the itineraries didn't make a lot of logical sense.

"They tried to have us in Milan in the morning and Bellagio in the afternoon, and with the train timetables and ferry schedules, this would not really be feasible. It then had us back in Milan the following day to explore more. Following this itinerary, we'd have spent more time on transport than anything else."

She's also referred to AI to find gluten-free restaurants when travelling with a friend who has coeliac disease.

"This pulled back results that were massively out of date and just wrong in some cases. I found myself having to manually cross-reference each suggestion to see if the place was even still open.

"If I'm looking for seasonal things like ferry timetables in the shoulder season [months around the peak season], AI just doesn't seem to be up-to-date and accurate enough. Same for museums with seasonal opening times."

Instead, she advises people to only use it as a sounding board for broad inspiration. "You can find blogs and websites with complete guides and itineraries that are a lot more reliable and up to date. If you want a rough idea of things to do in a certain city, it's a great jumping-off point, but the amount of fact-checking it requires means that it doesn't really save you much time in the long run."