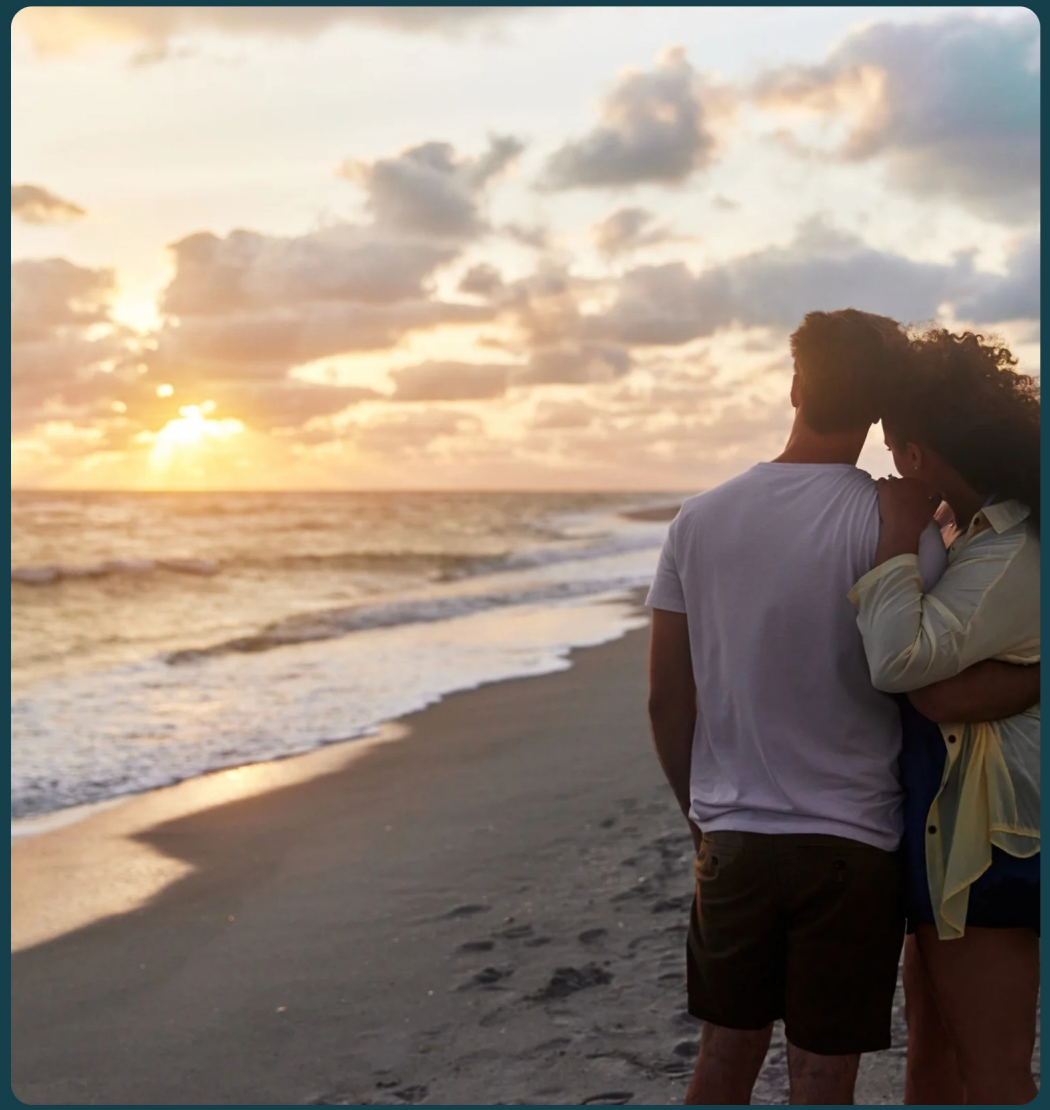
fort MYERS
ISLANDS, BEACHES & NEIGHBORHOODS

FOR FORT MYERS AREA BUSINESSES

The GEO Playbook

How travelers find businesses now, and what to do about it in the next 90 days.

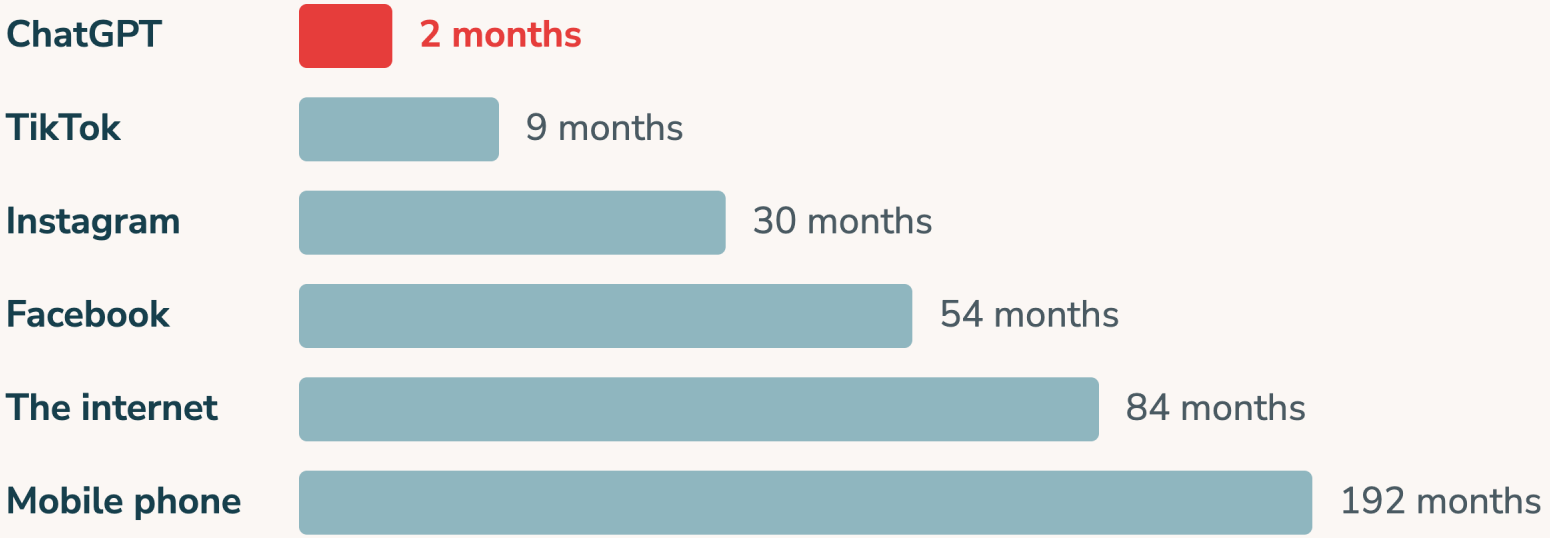


Prepared with MMGY

THE SHIFT

The fastest adoption curve in history.

Months from launch to 100 million users



ChatGPT

1 billion

people use it every week

Gemini

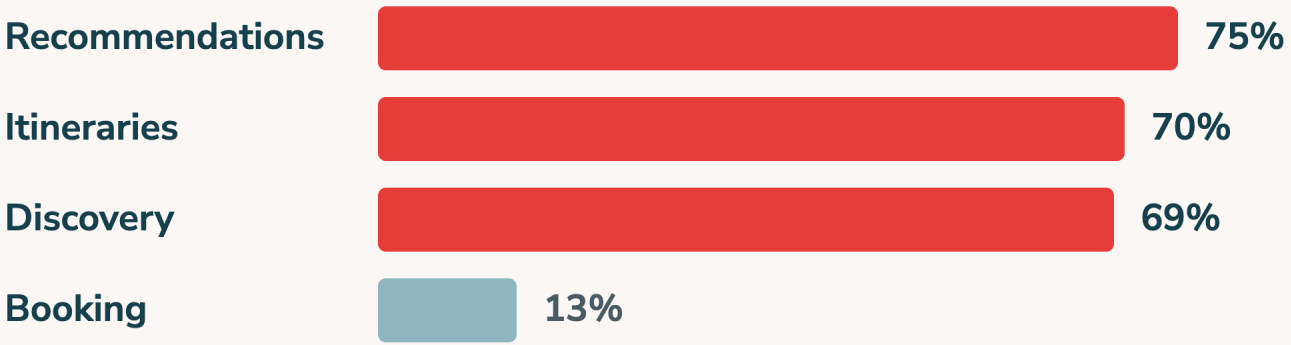
1 billion

people use it every month

THE SHIFT

Travelers are handing the shortlist to the machine.

What travelers use AI for



They ask it what to do. They don't ask it to book. The decision about where to eat and stay is made long before any money moves.

40%
of travelers already plan trips with AI

91%
of millennial and Gen Z travelers use AI to plan

60%
say a recommendation from an AI they trust makes them more likely to book

THE SHIFT

Travelers stopped browsing.

1. They ask.
2. They don’t click.
3. The trip starts and ends in the chat window.
4. They expect it to be about them.

OUT OF 10 GOOGLE SEARCHES

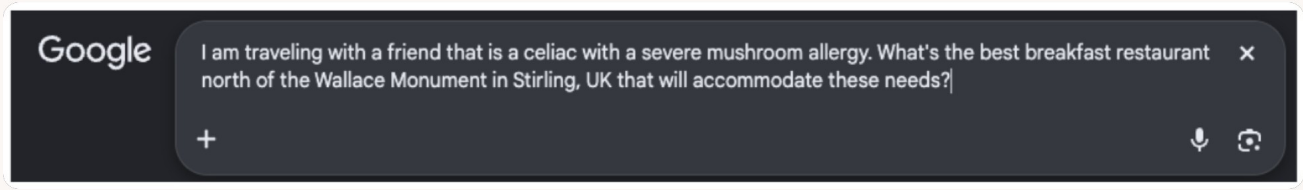


Only 3 reach a website.

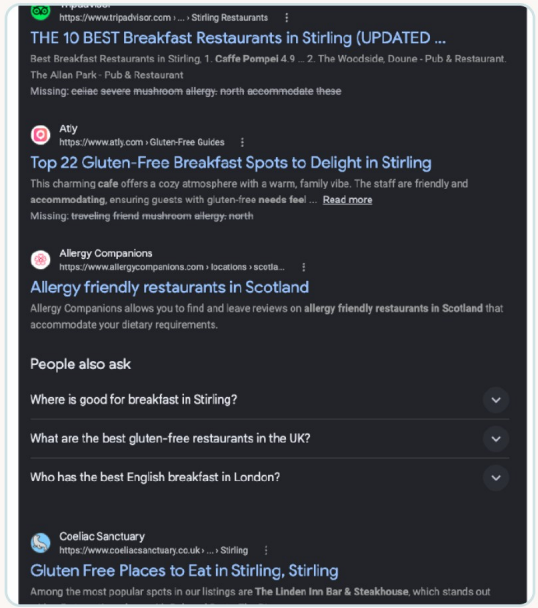
The other 7 are answered on the page. When an AI Overview appears, clicks to the sites it quotes fall by more than half.

ONE REAL QUESTION

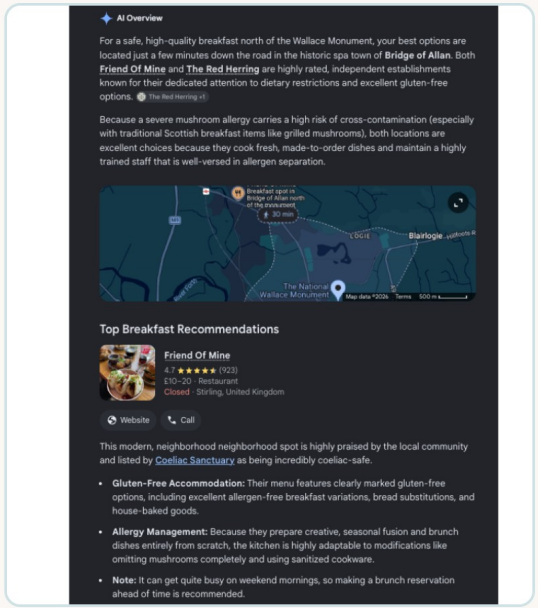
Four tools, four different answers.



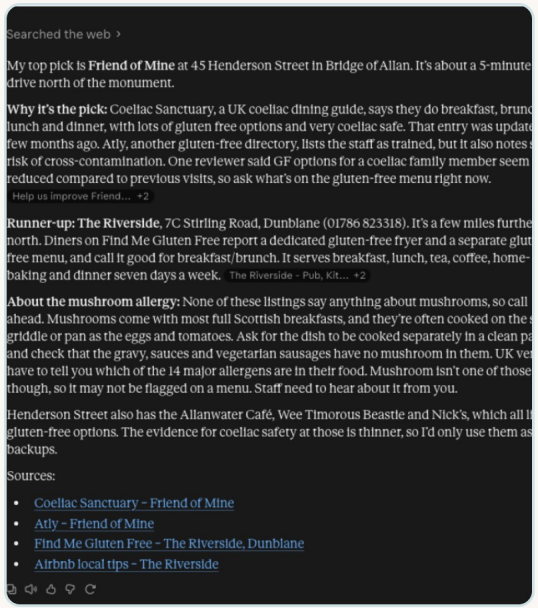
Traditional Google



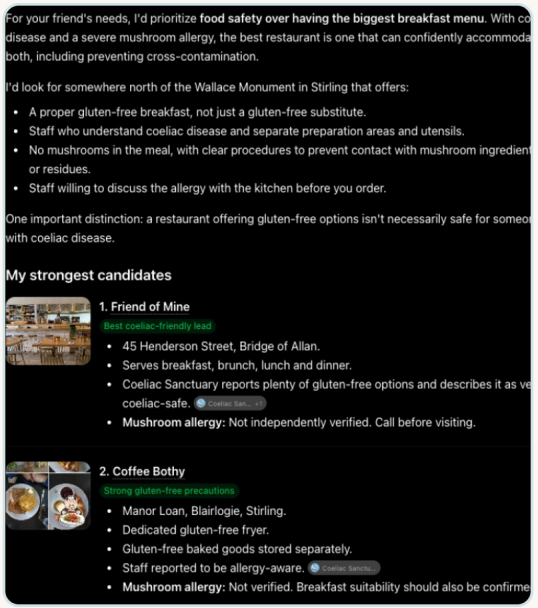
Google AI Overview



Claude



ChatGPT



Google gave a list of lists. The three AI tools each named one café. They found it on a small gluten-free guide that happened to list it. The cafe didn't do anything special. Someone else wrote it down.

UNDER THE HOOD

Every AI has two ways of knowing you.

Memory

Everything ever published about you, baked in when the model was trained. Frozen at a date. If your hours changed last spring, memory may still have the old ones.

Live search

When it decides it needs a fresh answer, it goes out and searches the web, just like you would. Then it reads what it finds and writes the answer.

1 in 3

answers about destinations are written from memory alone. No live search at all.

How often each one actually goes and looks

Tool	Searches the live web	What that means for you
Perplexity	Every time	Your current web presence decides the answer
Google AI Overviews and AI Mode	Always	Google Business Profile and your site matter most here
ChatGPT	Sometimes	Roughly one question in three. More often for local questions
Gemini	When it needs to	Leans on memory unless the question demands something fresh
Claude	Rarely	Mostly what it already knows. Change its mind over months, not days

UNDER THE HOOD

The AI doesn't search what you typed.

WHAT THE TRAVELER TYPES

"Best place for a family dinner on Fort Myers Beach with a sunset view?"

WHAT THE AI ACTUALLY SEARCHES, ALL AT ONCE

- best family restaurants fort myers beach 2026
- fort myers beach sunset dinner top rated
- kid friendly waterfront restaurant fort myers beach reviews
- visit fort myers official site dining
- [your restaurant] menu hours official site
- fort myers beach vs naples family dinner

10
searches behind one travel question, on average

#1
phrase it searches: "official site"

1 in 3
questions trigger a search for "latest" or this year

1 in 2
searches name a competing place

SO WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT IT

Being official gets you found. Being accurate everywhere gets you believed. Having a point of view gets you chosen.

Five things. None of them cost money. All of them are in the playbook you'll take home.

MOVE 1

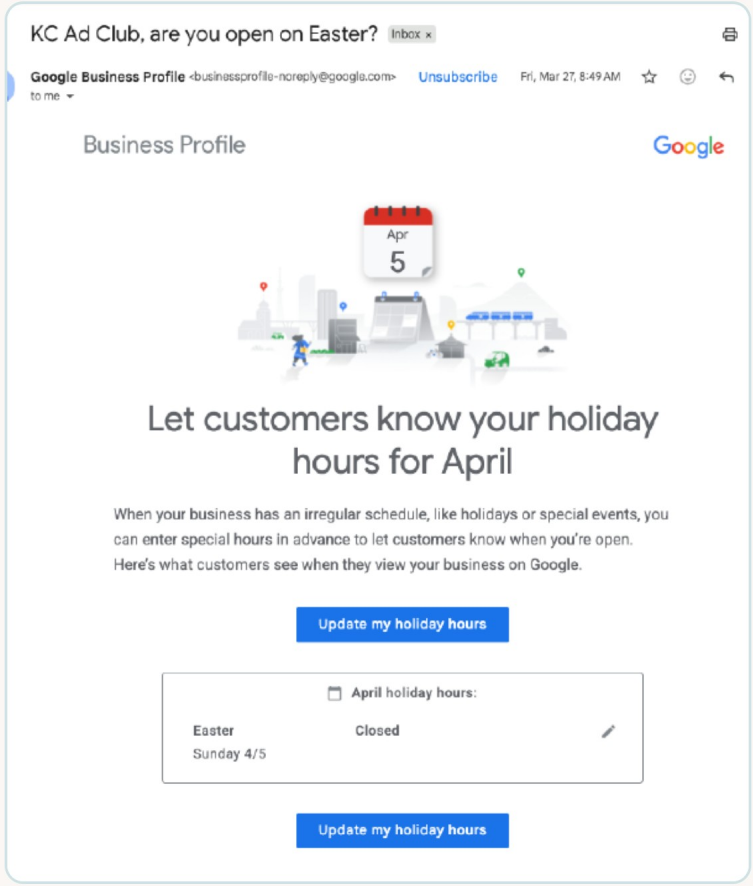
Google doesn't know anything about you.

Every blank field on your Business Profile is a question the AI answers by guessing, or by asking your competitor.

- Pick the exact category. Google has 4,000. "Cuban restaurant" beats "Restaurant."
- Tick every attribute. Outdoor seating, pet friendly, pool, kids menu, parking.
- Twenty photos, then more every month.
- Menu or rooms typed in as text. Then copy the same facts to Bing, Apple, Yelp and your website.

22% → 94%

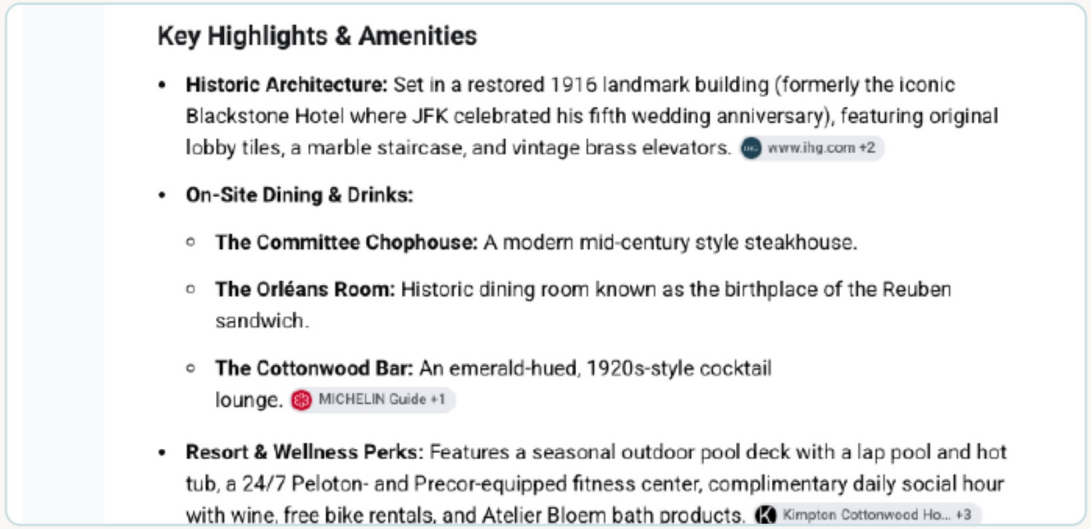
how much more likely a hotel is to be recommended once its profile is complete instead of half done



MOVE 2

Ask the AI two questions about you. Tonight.

“Why should I stay at [your business]?”

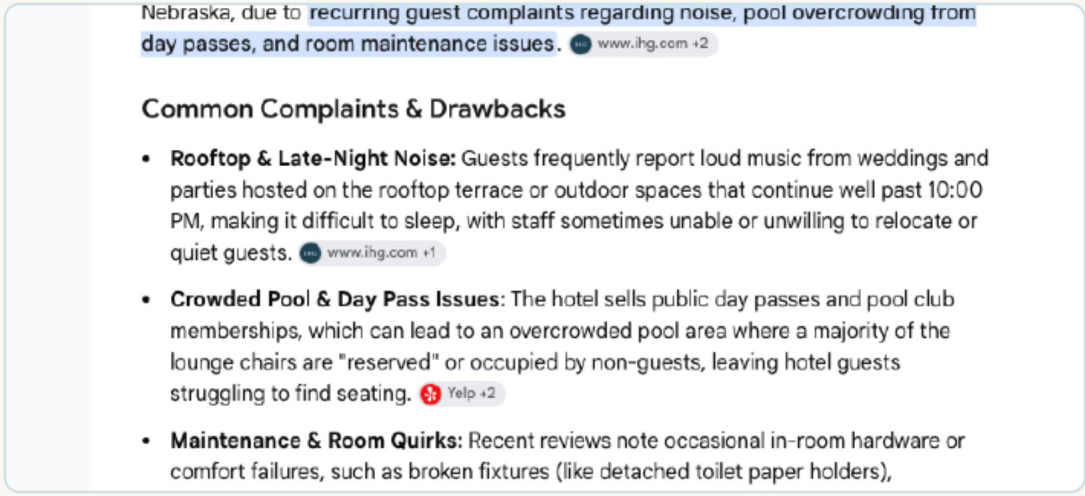


Key Highlights & Amenities

- **Historic Architecture:** Set in a restored 1916 landmark building (formerly the iconic Blackstone Hotel where JFK celebrated his fifth wedding anniversary), featuring original lobby tiles, a marble staircase, and vintage brass elevators. www.ihg.com +2
- **On-Site Dining & Drinks:**
  - **The Committee Chophouse:** A modern mid-century style steakhouse.
  - **The Orléans Room:** Historic dining room known as the birthplace of the Reuben sandwich.
  - **The Cottonwood Bar:** An emerald-hued, 1920s-style cocktail lounge. MICHELIN Guide +1
- **Resort & Wellness Perks:** Features a seasonal outdoor pool deck with a lap pool and hot tub, a 24/7 Peloton- and Precor-equipped fitness center, complimentary daily social hour with wine, free bike rentals, and Atelier Bloem bath products. Kimpton Cottonwood Ho... +3

What you’re known for, and which sources the AI is leaning on to say it.

“Why shouldn’t I stay at [your business]?”

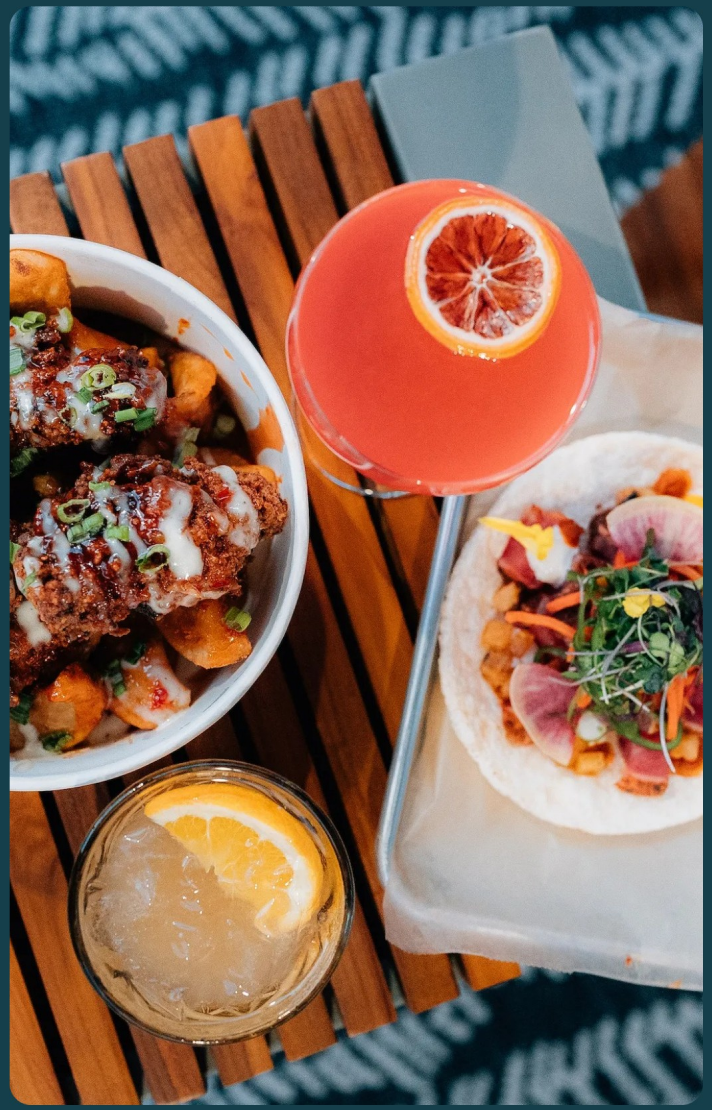


Nebraska, due to recurring guest complaints regarding noise, pool overcrowding from day passes, and room maintenance issues. www.ihg.com +2

Common Complaints & Drawbacks

- **Rooftop & Late-Night Noise:** Guests frequently report loud music from weddings and parties hosted on the rooftop terrace or outdoor spaces that continue well past 10:00 PM, making it difficult to sleep, with staff sometimes unable or unwilling to relocate or quiet guests. www.ihg.com +1
- **Crowded Pool & Day Pass Issues:** The hotel sells public day passes and pool club memberships, which can lead to an overcrowded pool area where a majority of the lounge chairs are "reserved" or occupied by non-guests, leaving hotel guests struggling to find seating. Yelp +2
- **Maintenance & Room Quirks:** Recent reviews note occasional in-room hardware or comfort failures, such as broken fixtures (like detached toilet paper holders),

The objections every traveler hears before they call you. Noise, parking, price, a bad night from 2024. Each one is either a fix or a page you need to write.



MOVE 3

Build your review engine.

130 vs 10

Google reviews on businesses the AI recommends, versus businesses it can't find at all.

- Ask in person, at the happy moment. "How was everything?" then "Would you leave us a Google review?"
- Nudge the words. "Say what you ordered." Specific reviews teach the AI; "great place" teaches it nothing.
- Reply to every one within two days. Your replies are read as part of your description.

How many and how recent beat the star rating. The world belongs to the askers.

MOVE 4

Write the page nobody writes.

Ask the AI for “best restaurants in Fort Myers” and it praises everyone. Ask “is [your place] worth it?” and it goes looking for complaints. Right now it finds them in a one-star review. It should find them on your website, in your words.

THE TRAVELER ASKS

“Is there parking?”

WHAT THEY MEAN

“Will I circle for 20 minutes with hungry kids in the car?”

YOUR PAGE SAYS

“Free lot out back, 30 spaces. Saturdays it fills by 7, so use the public lot on Estero, a two-minute walk.”

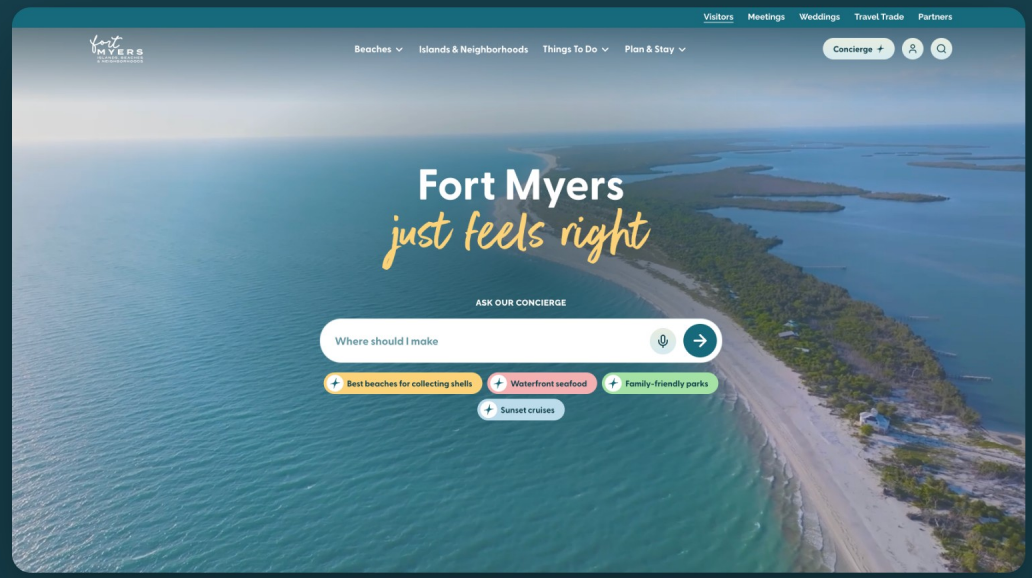
- **Start with the ten questions you answer every day** by phone or at the host stand. Each one is a page or an FAQ entry.
- **Then your “why shouldn’t I” list.** Price, crowds, noise, what’s under renovation. Answer the worry as well as the fact.
- **Pick a lane you can own.** “Best grouper sandwich on Fort Myers Beach” has three contenders. Say it on your homepage.

MOVE 5

Your most important listing is on VisitFortMyers.com.

Remember the number one phrase the AI searches: “official site.” For this area, that is VisitFortMyers.com. It is the official destination site, with every local business in one trusted place, and the AI treats it as the authority on Fort Myers.

- Make your partner listing complete, with your best photos and the same facts as everywhere else.
- Its itineraries, guides and stories are what the AI quotes first about this area. Ask the team how to be featured.
- The new site answers travelers’ questions directly, and your listing is part of those answers.



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One source of truth for the whole destination, for travelers and for the machines that answer them.

YOUR HOMEWORK

Five things to do this month.

1

Ask the AI why someone should, and shouldn't, choose you

Tonight. Write both lists down. Do the same for two competitors.

2

Fill in every field on Google Business Profile

Exact category, every attribute, 20 photos, menu or rooms as text. Then match Bing, Apple, Yelp and your site.

3

Check your VisitFortMyers.com listing

Complete, current, best photos. It's the official source the AI trusts most.

4

Start asking for reviews, in person, every day

Reply to every one within two days.

5

Write one page that answers one real question

Start with the top item on your "shouldn't" list. Put a date on it.

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Get the playbook.

Scan for the full GEO Playbook: the AI audit prompt ready to paste, the Google Business Profile checklist, review reply tips, and the quarterly scorecard. Share it with whoever runs your listings.

visitfortmyers.com/geo-playbook

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MMGY

Questions?
David Kenworthy · dkenworthy@mmgy.com

Scan with your phone camera