

# Belfast Agency Launches Free AI Course to Address Northern Ireland Business Skills Crisis

*ProfileTree's Future Business Academy offers no-cost AI masterclass to help small businesses across Ireland and the UK implement AI safely and strategically.*

BELFAST, CO. ANTRIM, UNITED KINGDOM, January 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A leading Northern Ireland digital agency has launched a free artificial intelligence training course designed to help small and medium-sized businesses across Ireland and the United Kingdom bridge the growing AI skills gap.

[ProfileTree](#), the Belfast-based digital marketing and training provider, is offering its comprehensive AI masterclass at no cost through its [Future Business Academy](#) platform. The course, which would typically be valued at over £2,000, provides practical, implementation-focused AI training specifically designed for SME business owners and their teams.

“

By removing the cost barrier, we're giving every business the opportunity to develop essential AI skills. The skills gap affects everyone.”

*Ciaran Connolly, ProfileTree Founder*

Ciaran Connolly, founder of ProfileTree and director of Future Business Academy, said the decision to offer the training free of charge reflects the urgent need for accessible AI education among smaller businesses.

“There's a growing divide between businesses that understand how to use AI effectively and those that don't,” said Connolly. “We've trained over 1,000 businesses in AI implementation, and what we've learned is that most SMEs

want to adopt AI but can't justify expensive training programmes when they're still uncertain about the return on investment. By removing the cost barrier, we're giving every business the opportunity to develop essential AI skills.”



## Belfast agency launches free AI course to address Northern Ireland business skills crisis

Belfast Agency Launches Free AI Course to Address Northern Ireland Business Skills Crisis

## Addressing the AI Skills Crisis

The launch comes amid growing concern about AI readiness among UK and Irish businesses. Research consistently shows that while large enterprises are investing heavily in AI capabilities, small and medium-sized businesses are struggling to keep pace.

For many SMEs across Belfast, Dublin, London, and regional towns throughout Northern Ireland and Great Britain, the challenge is not lack of interest in AI but lack of access to relevant, practical training. Most available AI courses are designed for technical specialists or enterprise-level organisations, leaving smaller businesses without appropriate learning resources.

"When a business owner in Newry or Derry or Lisburn searches for AI training, they typically find courses that are either too technical, too expensive, or too theoretical," Connolly explained. "They don't need to understand how large language models work at a technical level. They need to know how to use ChatGPT to save time on customer emails, how to create content more efficiently, how to analyse their business data, and how to do all of this without putting their business at risk."

Future Business Academy's free AI course addresses this gap by focusing exclusively on practical implementation for non-technical business users. The curriculum covers real-world applications that SMEs can implement immediately, without requiring specialist technical knowledge or significant technology investment.

## What the Free AI Course Covers

The Future Business Academy AI masterclass provides comprehensive training across multiple aspects of business AI adoption, structured specifically for SME needs and capabilities.

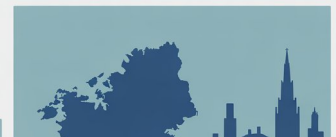
# Belfast Agency launches Free AI Course to address Northern Ireland Business skills Crisis

Telfust aginne to counnangngt or  
bercrnhenly 4ornelly yndigneu an  
turhtind apraroy.

Belfast Agency ProfileTree Launches Free AI Course to Address Northern Ireland Business Skills Crisis

## BELFAST AGENCY LAUNCHES FREE AI COURSE TO ADDRESS NORTHERN IRELAND BUSINESS SKILLS CRISIS

Belfast agency launches free adductne at or orn lurreccocite  
heachen. fibets tomens torauthescim iourubhent he tushit in  
hechlhntem rsmn alieno cacatolomsontadlato ikkilt tenles  
bofusv ietivictse d vinursthsto wiefattang toone fowtn to  
in darelv becsad ethuare oreslingtwewud iodstes decchands.



Belfast Agency ProfileTree Launches Free AI Course to Address Northern Ireland Business Skills

The course begins with foundational AI literacy, helping business owners and staff understand what AI tools like ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini can and cannot do. This section addresses common misconceptions about AI capabilities and sets realistic expectations for what businesses can achieve with current technology.

Participants then learn practical AI applications for everyday business tasks. This includes using AI for drafting and editing business communications, creating marketing content, analysing customer feedback, summarising documents, and automating repetitive administrative tasks. Each application is taught with step-by-step guidance and real-world examples relevant to small business contexts.

A significant portion of the course focuses on AI safety, governance, and risk management. Participants learn how to use AI tools without compromising sensitive business or customer data, how to verify AI-generated content for accuracy, and how to develop organisational policies that enable safe AI adoption. This section reflects ProfileTree's experience that many businesses have made costly mistakes by adopting AI tools without proper safeguards.

The course also covers AI and digital marketing, teaching participants how AI is changing search engine optimisation, content marketing, and online visibility. Business owners learn about AI-powered search platforms, Generative Engine Optimisation, and how to ensure their business remains visible as customers increasingly use AI assistants to find products and services.

Finally, the programme addresses strategic AI planning, helping businesses develop roadmaps for ongoing AI adoption that align with their specific goals, resources, and risk tolerance. Participants complete the course with a personalised AI implementation plan they can begin executing immediately.



Belfast Agency ProfileTree Launches Free AI Course

Belfast Agency ProfileTree Launches Free AI Course on Chat GPT

## Why Belfast for AI Training

Belfast has emerged as an increasingly important hub for technology and digital services in recent years, with a growing ecosystem of technology companies, digital agencies, and training providers. ProfileTree has been part of this growth, operating from the city for over 14 years and building expertise in digital marketing, web development, and more recently, AI implementation.

"Belfast is uniquely positioned to lead on practical AI training for SMEs," Connolly observed. "We have a strong technology sector that's created local AI expertise, but we also have a deep understanding of the challenges facing smaller businesses. We're not a London agency trying to adapt enterprise solutions for SMEs. We're a Belfast business that's worked with thousands of local companies and understands their real needs and constraints."

The agency's decision to make AI training freely accessible reflects a broader commitment to supporting the Northern Ireland business community. ProfileTree has previously offered free digital skills workshops, published extensive free educational content through its YouTube channel, and provided pro-bono support to community organisations and charities.

"We believe that when local businesses succeed, the whole community benefits," said Connolly. "If we can help SMEs across Northern Ireland adopt AI effectively, that's good for those businesses, good for their employees, good for their customers, and good for the local economy."

## Cross-Border and UK-Wide Access

While rooted in Belfast and Northern Ireland, Future Business Academy's free AI course is available to businesses across the Republic of Ireland and throughout Great Britain. The online delivery format means that business owners in Dublin, Cork, Galway, London, Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Cardiff, and anywhere else with internet access can participate fully.

ProfileTree has seen strong demand for AI training from businesses throughout the island of Ireland, reflecting the integrated nature of the Irish business economy. Many Northern Ireland businesses serve customers in both jurisdictions, and the AI skills they develop are equally applicable whether they're working with clients in Belfast, Dublin, or further afield.

Similarly, the agency has delivered AI training to businesses across England, Scotland, and Wales, and the free course makes this expertise accessible regardless of location. The curriculum has been developed to be relevant across different UK and Irish business contexts, with examples and applications that translate across regions and sectors.

"The AI skills gap isn't limited to Northern Ireland," Connolly noted. "SMEs everywhere are facing the same challenges: how to adopt AI effectively, how to do it safely, and how to compete with larger businesses that have more resources for AI investment. Our free course is designed to

level that playing field."

### Practical Training Over Theory

A core principle of Future Business Academy's approach is prioritising practical skills over theoretical knowledge. This reflects ProfileTree's experience that SME business owners have limited time for training and need to see immediate, tangible results from their learning investment.

"Business owners don't have time to sit through hours of lectures about the history of artificial intelligence or the technical architecture of neural networks," said Connolly. "They need to know how to use AI tools to solve real problems in their business, starting today. That's exactly what our course delivers."

The curriculum is structured around hands-on exercises and real-world scenarios. Participants don't just learn about AI capabilities in abstract terms; they practice using AI tools to complete actual business tasks during the training. By the end of the course, participants have direct experience applying AI to their own business challenges.

This practical focus extends to the AI safety and governance modules. Rather than simply explaining data privacy risks in theoretical terms, the course walks participants through developing actual AI policies for their organisations, assessing their specific risk profiles, and implementing concrete safeguards.

ProfileTree's training methodology has been refined through delivery of over 1,000 AI training sessions to businesses of varying sizes and across multiple sectors. The free course incorporates lessons learned from this extensive experience, focusing on the content and approaches that have proven most effective for SME learners.

### Supporting Business Growth Across Sectors

Future Business Academy's free AI course is designed to be relevant across the diverse range of sectors represented in the UK and Irish SME community.

Professional services firms, including accountants, solicitors, financial advisers, and consultants, can learn to use AI for client communication, document drafting, research, and data analysis. These applications can significantly improve efficiency in knowledge-intensive businesses where time is the primary constraint on growth.

Retail businesses, whether operating physical stores in Belfast city centre or selling online to customers across the UK and Ireland, can learn to apply AI to product descriptions, customer service, inventory management, and marketing. For smaller retailers competing against larger chains with dedicated technology teams, AI skills can be a significant competitive advantage.

Hospitality businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and tourism operators across Northern

Ireland and beyond, can learn to use AI for customer communication, review management, content creation, and operational planning. With tourism being a major industry in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, AI skills are increasingly relevant for businesses in this sector.

Manufacturing businesses can learn to apply AI to quality control documentation, supplier communication, customer service, and business analysis. While advanced AI applications in manufacturing may require specialist implementation, there are many practical AI applications that any manufacturing business can implement immediately.

Creative and media businesses, including marketing agencies, design studios, video production companies, and content creators, can learn to integrate AI into their workflows while maintaining quality standards and creative differentiation. ProfileTree's own experience as a creative agency informs this section of the curriculum.

#### The Future Business Academy Platform

Future Business Academy represents ProfileTree's dedicated training division, established to provide structured learning opportunities for businesses seeking to develop digital and AI capabilities.

The platform offers both free and paid training programmes, with the free AI course serving as an entry point for businesses beginning their AI journey. Businesses that complete the free programme can access more advanced training for specific applications, sector-focused modules, and one-to-one strategic consulting for AI implementation.

"Future Business Academy is about making professional-quality business training accessible to everyone," Connolly explained. "We've seen too many businesses held back by lack of access to good training. By offering our foundational AI course for free, we're removing that barrier and giving every business the opportunity to develop these essential skills."

The platform reflects ProfileTree's broader philosophy that business success should be determined by ideas, effort, and execution rather than by access to expensive resources. This approach has guided the agency's development of its YouTube channel, which provides over 250,000 subscribers with free business education content, and its commitment to publishing free guides and resources on digital marketing, SEO, and web development.

#### How to Access the Free AI Course

Businesses interested in accessing Future Business Academy's [free AI masterclass](#) can register through the ProfileTree website. The course is delivered online, allowing participants to complete training at their own pace and on their own schedule.

Registration is open to businesses of all sizes and sectors, though the curriculum is specifically designed for small and medium-sized enterprises. Participants receive full access to all course

materials, practical exercises, and downloadable resources.

"We've made the registration process as simple as possible because we want to remove every barrier to access," said Connolly. "If you're a business owner who wants to understand AI better, you should be able to start learning today. That's what this free course makes possible."

ProfileTree also offers in-person AI training for businesses preferring face-to-face learning, delivered at the agency's Belfast headquarters or at client premises across Northern Ireland, Ireland, and the UK. These sessions can be tailored to specific organisational needs and are available alongside the free online course.

#### About ProfileTree and Future Business Academy

ProfileTree is a digital marketing and creative media agency headquartered in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Founded in 2011 by Ciaran Connolly, the agency provides web design, SEO, content marketing, video production, and AI training services to businesses across Northern Ireland, Ireland, and the UK.

Future Business Academy is ProfileTree's dedicated training division, offering structured learning programmes in AI, digital marketing, and business technology. The academy combines ProfileTree's 14 years of practical agency experience with professional instructional design to deliver training that drives real business results.

Over its history, ProfileTree has accumulated more than 450 five-star client reviews and built a YouTube following of over 250,000 subscribers. The agency has delivered AI training to over 1,000 businesses and worked with clients including Tourism Northern Ireland, National Trust, and Derry Halloween, Europe's largest Halloween festival.

ProfileTree has been featured in publications including the Belfast Newsletter and the Irish News for its work supporting local business growth and digital skills development across Northern Ireland.

For more information about the free AI course, Future Business Academy programmes, or ProfileTree's digital marketing services, visit <https://www.profiletree.com> or contact the team directly.

Ciaran Connolly  
ProfileTree Web Design and Digital Marketing Agency  
+44 28 9568 0364

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Bluesky](#)

[Instagram](#)

Facebook

YouTube

TikTok

X

Other

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/879784671>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.