

TourConnect AI Named Finalist in 2026 Skift IDEA Awards

Recognition highlights how AI is changing the DMC consultant role - from repetitive itinerary work to validation, personalisation and higher-value client work

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[TourConnect AI](#) today announced that its flagship product, [Itinerary Assist AI](#), has been named a finalist in the Travel Technology category of the [2026 Skift IDEA Awards](#).

The entry, titled "Redefining the role of the DMC consultant with Agentic AI," recognises TourConnect AI's

contribution to transforming how Destination Management Companies (DMCs) operate. The Skift IDEA Awards are widely regarded as one of the travel industry's most respected annual recognition programmes. Now in its eighth year, the awards celebrate design, creativity, innovation and real-world impact. More than 490 entries were submitted globally in 2026, with finalists selected by Skift's editorial team and an independent panel of industry experts. Winners will be announced on 26 August 2026.

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Itinerary Assist AI is an AI-powered Copilot purpose-built for DMC consultants and inbound tour operators. Designed around the DMC consultants' workflow, it is integrated with systems like Outlook and Tourplan to mesh together communication and inventory processes. It automates the creation and updating of high-quality

itineraries from fragmented quote requests — whether emails, PDFs or spreadsheets. Launched in beta in 2024, the platform introduced automated product rules and conversational Chat functionality in 2025. By 2026, Itinerary Assist AI is live with premium DMCs across APAC, Europe,



The Skift IDEA Awards 2026 logo



TourConnect AI logo

Africa and the Americas and has processed more than \$100 million in itinerary value.

Clients report 40–60% time savings on initial itinerary builds, with 92% of service lines retained in final itineraries. This efficiency frees consultants from repetitive data entry and context-switching, allowing them to focus on destination expertise, relationship building with travel agents, and delivering hyper-customisation across FIT bookings.

“AI doesn’t replace the consultant. It removes the work that stops them from doing their best overall work,” said Michael Herrmann, CEO and Founder of TourConnect AI. “Being named a finalist in the Skift IDEA Awards is meaningful recognition of the progress our clients are making in elevating the role of the DMC consultant.”

Andrew Lewis, Operations Manager at Across Australia, added: “We fondly named our AI tool ‘Jeanie’. Before we implemented Jeanie, our consultants wasted hours every day simply data entering services... Jeanie now takes care of the majority of this task, allowing our consultants to dramatically improve their service to the agents.”

The recognition reflects a broader shift in how itinerary production can be structured. The opportunity is not to remove the consultant from the process, but to remove the repetitive production work that prevents experienced consultants from applying their expertise where it matters most. True personalisation isn’t just driven by collecting more data, but by applying intelligence to the data more deeply. When applied correctly, AI is able to make intelligent suggestions that might otherwise be missed - like a traveller having a birthday during the travel period or the group preferring EVs for transfers. These become meaningful conversation points that strengthen consultant-agent relationships and create unforgettable experiences.

TourConnect AI continues to partner closely with DMCs to help operations teams extract maximum value from their AI Copilot and to refine the technology for pre-trip workflows globally.

"What excites us most is seeing DMCs grow without the traditional trade-off between volume and quality. When consultants spend less time assembling itineraries and more time applying their expertise, the result is better experiences for travel agents and, ultimately, for travellers. That’s the real opportunity." said Ross Hill, Director of Growth, TourConnect AI

In the coming year we will continue developing Itinerary Assist AI and supporting more DMC teams as they adopt AI in their pre-trip workflows.

About TourConnect AI

TourConnect AI builds operational AI tools purpose-built for Destination Management Companies. Its flagship product, Itinerary Assist AI, acts as an intelligent Copilot that learns from each DMC’s unique data, rules and best-performing consultants. Already trusted by premium DMCs across 25 countries and having processed over \$100 million in itinerary value,

TourConnect AI is redefining the DMC workforce by amplifying consultant expertise and enabling sustainable growth.

Ross Hill

TourConnect AI

ross@tourconnect.com

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