

AI & Search Readiness Snapshot

A practical guide for Kāpiti tourism operators

Based on insights from the Tourism New Zealand AI workshop, July 2026



Why this matters

More travellers are now using AI tools (eg ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini) to research and plan trips, alongside or instead of traditional search engines. This shows up as a measurable drop in direct website traffic, one that tracks closely with the rise in AI-assisted search.

The practical upshot: being well set up for Google search is no longer enough on its own. Your business also needs to be visible, understandable, and trustworthy to AI systems because increasingly, they're the ones doing the recommending.



Three types of "findability"

The common thread across all three: write in plain, direct language that could be lifted straight into an answer, rather than marketing copy.

SEO

**Search Engine
Optimisation**

Being found in traditional search results.

AEO

**Answer Engine
Optimisation**

Being the direct answer an AI gives to a traveller's question.

GEO

**Generative Engine
Optimisation**

Being cited or drawn on within an AI-generated response.



What AI systems are actually looking for

Citability

Content needs to be clear and factual enough that an AI can confidently quote or summarise it. Avoid vague marketing language — answer real traveller questions directly.

Consistency

Your name, location, category and booking details need to read the same everywhere your own website, your NZ.com, Visit Kapiti listing, and your Google Business Profile. Inconsistency undermines trust, for travellers and AI alike.

How travellers (and AI) actually search

- ✓ Find — can the AI find you at all? (this is the GEO layer)
- ✓ Understand — can it tell what you offer and who it's for?
- ✓ Trust — does it trust your information enough to rely on it? (this is the AEO layer)
- ✓ Recommend — does it put you forward as the answer?

Consistency across all your listings underpins the whole process. It's also worth noting that forums like Reddit are a strong influence on how AI tools are trained to answer — their direct Q&A format is a useful style to copy for your own content.

AI & Search Readiness Snapshot

A practical guide for Kāpiti tourism operators

Based on insights from the Tourism New Zealand AI workshop, July 2026

Six questions your content should answer clearly

Wherever you're listed — your website, NZ.com, your RTO, Google — make sure the written text clearly answers these six questions:

Question	What to include
1. What is it called?	Use one consistent name (and acronym, if you have one) everywhere.
2. Where does it operate?	State town, region and country explicitly — don't assume it's obvious.
3. What do you offer?	Plain English. No marketing jargon. Easy for a system to classify.
4. Who is it for?	Name the traveller types you suit — families, couples, thrill-seekers, etc.
5. Can you be trusted?	Awards, reviews and certifications written into your text, not just shown as logos.
6. How do you book?	Say explicitly how and where to book.



Fixing your homepage and key pages

Lead with the answer

The first paragraph of your homepage (and other key landing pages) should directly answer the core question a traveller, or an AI, would ask about you.

Add FAQ blocks

On key landing pages, you should write these as direct question-and-answer pairs, in plain language, on your key pages. These are readable and understandable by AI - The AEO piece.



Self-audit checklist

Work through this for your own website, your NZ.com, Visit Kapiti listing, and your Google Business Profile and check they all say the same thing.

	Your Website	NZ.com DTO Listing	Google Business Profile
Business name spelled the same everywhere	☐	☐	☐
Locality stated clearly	☐	☐	☐
Experience category	☐	☐	☐
Traveller fit	☐	☐	☐
Trust signals (awards, reviews, certifications) in written text	☐	☐	☐
Booking pathway clearly stated	☐	☐	☐

AI & Search Readiness Snapshot

A practical guide for Kāpiti tourism operators

Based on insights from the Tourism New Zealand AI workshop, July 2026

Action Plan

What you can do yourself



What you can do in your business

- Check your business name, location, category and booking details match across every listing
- Write trust signals (awards, reviews, certifications) into plain text, not just logos or badges
- Add a clear FAQ section to your website
- Clearly name who your experience is a good fit for
- Set a monthly reminder to check your listings are still accurate and current



What Visit Kapiti is doing at a District level

- Auditing regional listings for accuracy and consistency
- Making sure common regional traveller questions are answered
- Publishing itinerary content for the region
- Sharing learnings back with operators



Worked example

[newzealand.com/nz/things-to-do/](https://www.newzealand.com/nz/things-to-do/)

A good model to work from is an operator profile on NZ.com. You will see them written in plain, classifiable language and answers the six questions above directly. Use it as a template when reviewing your own listings and website copy.

Adrift Tongariro – Central North Island

Adrift Tongariro is a highly regarded outdoor adventure company based in the [Tongariro National Park](#). It specializes in guided hiking and canoeing tours through the stunning landscapes of Tongariro and [Whanganui National Parks](#), including the iconic [Tongariro Alpine Crossing](#) – often considered New Zealand's best one-day walk. These tours are available year-round, accommodating both summer and winter conditions. No mountaineering experience is required.

[Discover Adrift Tongariro](#)



Get Involved

Whether you want to discuss this topic part, attend a workshop or talk about destination marketing activity, we'd love to hear from you.



hello@visitkapiti.co.nz



www.visitkapiti.co.nz
www.businesskapiti.co.nz

