

The  
**Phocuswright**  
Conference

BY NORTHSTAR

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**TOURISE**

[www.phocuswrightconference.com](http://www.phocuswrightconference.com)

# POST-SHOW REPORT

# GAME ON



# 2025 Conference Overview

More than 1,200 of the travel industry's most influential leaders from around the world came together for The Phocuswright Conference 2025 in San Diego, CA, making it one of our most dynamic years yet. Fueled by a standout theme "Game On", packed rooms and nonstop conversation, the energy carried from the main stage to a buzzing Exhibitor Showcase and into curated small-group networking where real connections turned into real business.

Across three high-impact days, attendees connected through Industry Roundtables, one-on-one meetings, the Female Founders Lunch, New Leadership for New Age interactive session, Young Leaders Summit and Startup Program, along with early-morning runs and Yoga that set the pace and intentions for days full of insight and opportunity. Visionary leaders took Center Stage, innovators shared their next big ideas and the industry's most important stories unfolded live in the PhocusWire Studio.

Learn more about The Phocuswright Conference at [www.phocuswrightconference.com](http://www.phocuswrightconference.com).



WATCH ALL SESSION VIDEOS



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# The Theme: Game On

## Level up or get left behind

It's a watershed moment for travel. Geopolitical tensions and economic volatility are shaking traveler sentiment and behavior, compelling suppliers and intermediaries to remain agile and responsive. At the same time, the pace of transformation isn't just accelerating—it's smashing speed records. Artificial intelligence is now embedded in every phase of the traveler's journey and is fundamentally rewriting the rules for how companies must operate to just stay in the race, let alone win it. Tech stacks that once took years to build are being leapfrogged in weeks or even days. And nimble new players—many from emerging markets that are fueling innovation and growth—jockey for position, while incumbents and legacy models face continual disruption. One thing is clear: Watching from the sidelines is merely a recipe for irrelevance.

This year's Phocuswright Conference theme, Game On, is more than a rallying cry. It's a point of no return—where the imperative to break out of the box and make bold moves has become just table stakes. Practically overnight (and forever), the playbook has changed. Dare to blink, and it's Game Over.

## Turbo mode activated

Across segments and sectors, the twists and turns keep coming, driving the industry to develop fresh tactics and harness ever more powerful tools to keep pace with the change:

### TRAVEL SEARCH & BOOKING

The rise of generative AI and conversational search is revolutionizing how travelers discover, plan and

book their journeys. As digital assistants evolve into intuitive trip planners, the window between inspiration and booking is shrinking. Can marketing strategies adapt quickly enough to harness this AI-driven shift and significantly boost conversions and customer loyalty?

### AIR

Artificial intelligence can now be deployed to optimize dynamic pricing, improve operational efficiencies and (finally!) deliver on the promise of true personalization. How can carriers capitalize?

### ACCOMMODATIONS

As hotel chains double down on loyalty-driven direct bookings, short-term rental platforms continue marching toward professionalization and expanding beyond their core markets. Room or rental: Only those with differentiated value will capture the traveler's trust.

### DESTINATIONS

With overtourism threatening sustainability and visitor sentiment, DMOs are challenged to balance growth and satisfy travelers' bucket lists amidst increasing regulation and environmental concerns. Can the beaten track bounce back or will the action shift further afield?

### DIGITAL ID

As AI and digital agents gain traction, control over identity is shifting from travel brands to travelers themselves. Biometric boarding, decentralized IDs and passport-free check-ins are unlocking seamless experiences but with rising stakes around trust, privacy and cross-border interoperability. Will the industry keep pace or continue to play catch-up?

### TRAVEL AGENCIES

Though brick-and-mortar agencies continue their post-pandemic comeback, OTAs and others are all tenaciously nipping at their heels. Meanwhile, ascendent AI agents and planning tools threaten any agency—traditional or online—that doesn't offer deep expertise or seamless service.

### EXPERIENCES

Travelers are prioritizing unique and immersive experiences, driving demand for adventure tourism, luxury trips and local-led activities. Despite its rapid growth, the sector remains young and fragmented—ripe for innovation, consolidation and deeper integration into the broader travel ecosystem.

### INSPIRATION

Viral trends and influencers can now shape entire booking cycles. Destinations and suppliers need creator-aligned content strategies or will find themselves completely absent in the inspiration phase.

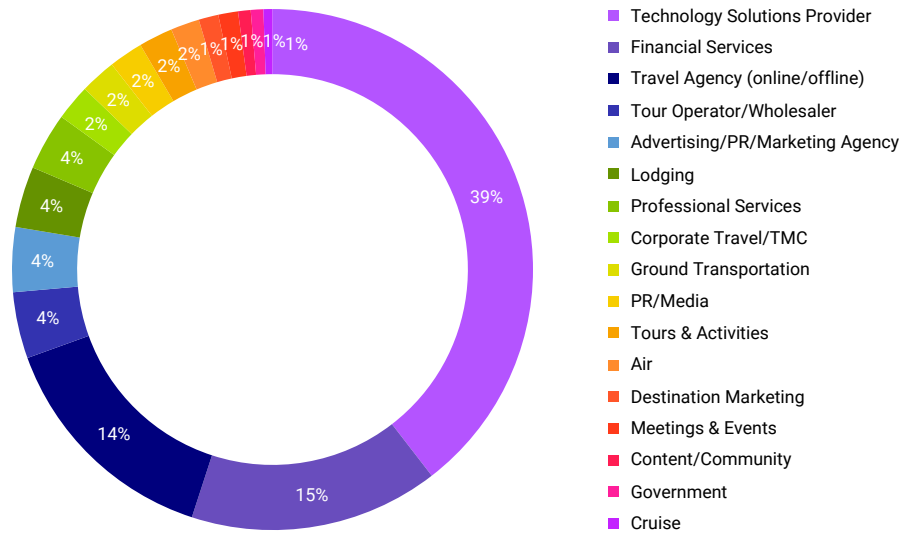
## Your move

For nearly three decades, The Phocuswright Conference has challenged travel's traditional leaderboard, reshaped the rules of engagement and heralded the arrival of new players—heroes and villains alike. The industry's premier event is designed to sharpen strategies, uncover superpowers and help contestants navigate to the future, if not the finish line. This is your moment. This is your game.

# Audience Overview

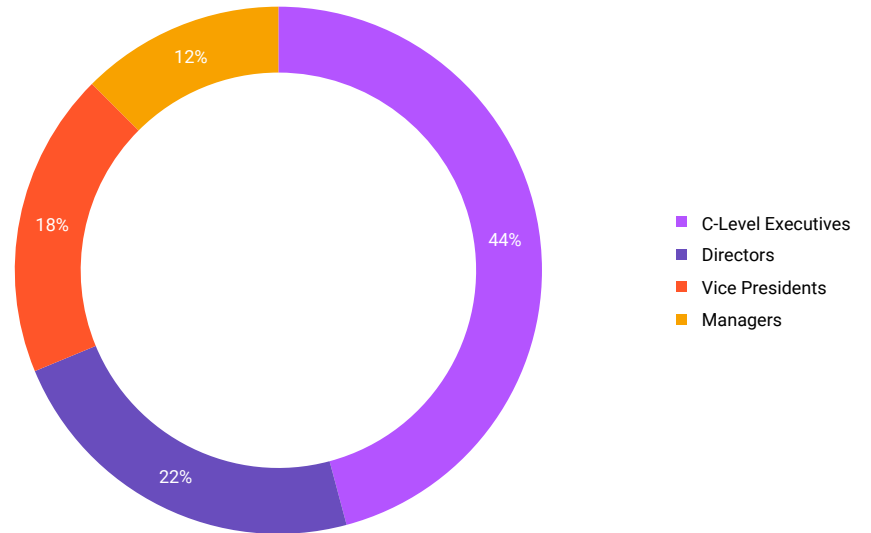
## Dream Demographics

The Phocuswright Conference 2024 attendees represented dozens of countries from every travel, tourism and hospitality sector. No other conference provides access to such an elite and motivated group of prospective clients.



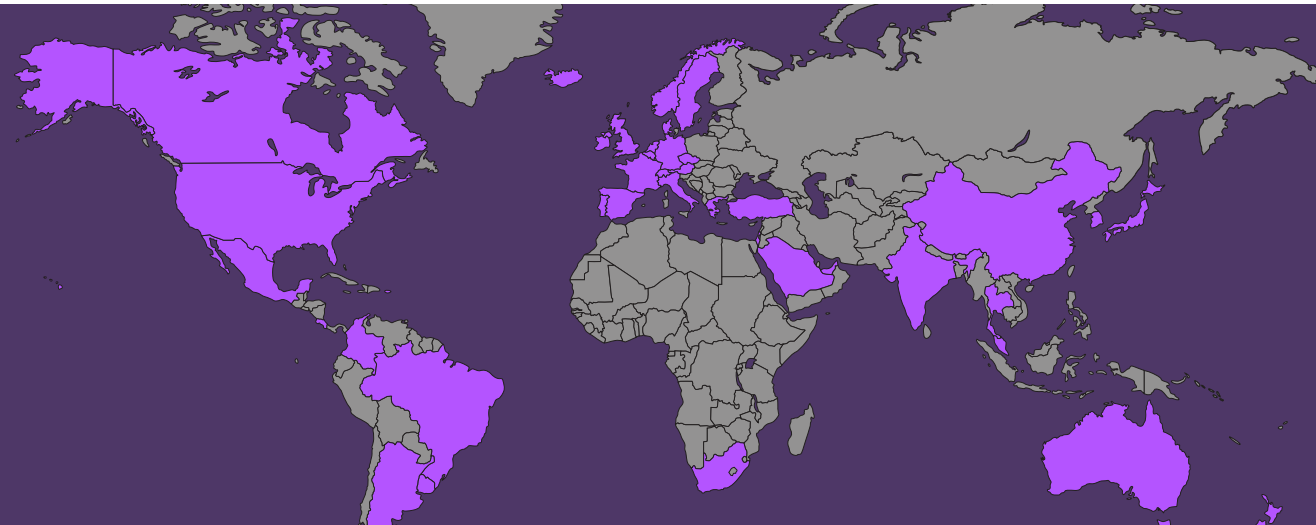
## The People you Want to Meet Were There

The number one reason to attend The Phocuswright Conference is networking. Other attendees are eager to meet you and build a partnership.



## A Global Event

The Phocuswright Conference was packed with senior executives from the top travel businesses from around the globe. Attendees represented over 45 countries.



# Audience Overview

## Shared Goals, Shared Successes

Attendees set a wide variety of objectives and business interests.

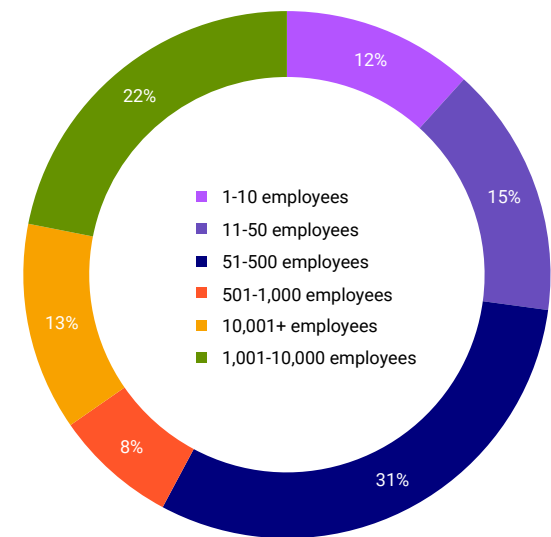
|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Networking and Making New Contacts        | 76% |
| Strategic Partnerships                    | 59% |
| Attend Sessions/Learning                  | 58% |
| New Clients and Leads                     | 44% |
| New Technology Solutions                  | 38% |
| Brand Awareness                           | 35% |
| Sales and Marketing Strategies            | 29% |
| Startups and Innovation                   | 28% |
| Market Expansion                          | 22% |
| Investment Opportunities and Acquisitions | 19% |
| Digital Transformation                    | 18% |
| Media Exposure                            | 15% |
| Operational Efficiency                    | 13% |
| Raise Capital                             | 12% |

## Topics of Interest

It's no surprise that technology and innovation led the way, but there was plenty of interest in consumer behavior, global trends, marketing and investment just to name a few.

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Technology in Travel                    | 85% |
| Innovation and Disruption               | 69% |
| Travel Trends and Consumer Behavior     | 67% |
| Regional and Global Market Trends       | 42% |
| Digital Marketing and Distribution      | 37% |
| Investment and Business Opportunities   | 35% |
| Customer Service and Experience         | 30% |
| Sustainability and Environmental Impact | 13% |

## Companies of All Sizes



# Testimonials

“ I think that the people who were at the conference were 100 percent interested in how we can change the travel industry.

“ It's easily the best conference of the year to have conversations with decision makers in a very kind and accepting environment.

“ Great opportunity to meet a mix of established players, investors and startups alike -very efficient way to meet many people at once.

“ The content is future looking, up to date and inspirational.

“ Networking is by far the most important factor to attending. A “who's who” is always there.

“ The conference provides deep insights from the industry leaders and networking opportunities with industry stakeholders.

“ The information I gained and the insights shared were truly invaluable and will directly inform the decisions we need to make moving forward.

“ It's the one and only travel conference a year we can't miss.

“ It's one of the rare conferences where you walk away with so many amazing new contacts and genuinely actionable ideas.

“ If you are looking to understand the direction of the travel industry this is a great place.

“ You can get real insight into where the industry is going- not just surface-level trends, but tangible strategies, data and innovations you can actually use.



# High Stakes and Expectations at “Game On”

## Wonder and Uncertainty Take Center Stage at The Phocuswright Conference

By Lorraine Sileo

Founder, Phocuswright Research & Senior Analyst

“Agentic AI has only been with us for a very short period of time, so what was really exciting to see is how... a new technology can be used to enhance the customer experience.” That is how Robert Buckman, SVP Solution Consulting, Americas, Amadeus, summed up what most people must have been thinking at The Phocuswright Conference in San Diego, CA, Nov. 18-20. We know a big shake-up is coming – we just don’t know how and when.

The transformation of the travel industry was the central topic at The Phocuswright Conference 2025. The entire value chain, from searching to sharing, will be altered. The holy grails of personalization, seamless booking and the connected trip are being shaped by a single ubiquitous technology called AI. This technology is in the hands of industry giants such as Google, Facebook, Expedia and Booking as well as an array of start-ups and dreamers who are all betting on the farm. And while this disruption is shaping up to be a doozy, there is still more speculation and opinion vs. actual results.

### TOOL OR TRANSFORMER

Everyone has a unique view of what AI means to them, their business, and the travel industry at large. For some, such as Rob Ranson, Chief Strategy Officer, Booking

Holding, AI is a tool to enhance and accelerate what is already happening in travel tech. For others, such as Evan Konwiser, Chief Product & Strategy Officer at American Express Global Business Travel, we’re in a “change moment”, but with lots of questions. “How are we going to create the marketplace that is more intelligent and contextualized and personalized, which suppliers want and travelers want and companies want?” AI portends a monumental shift in the way travel is packaged and sold, and perhaps it is the catalyst that breaks the powerful grip of current industry giants. But it’s too soon to tell.

The truth is that AI hasn’t fixed much...yet. The same challenges still exist in travel today that have always perplexed the industry. As OTAs continue their climb up the funnel to the start of the traveler journey, there is still much work to be done “down funnel”. These include cross-border issues, payment options, disruptions, booking connecting rooms (still a problem!) and more, according to Omri Morgenshtern, Chief Executive Officer, Agoda. “We are gradually and gradually solving them,” he said, adding that “AI is the magic to make it happen.”

Can AI solve the impossible challenge of truly knowing your customer? “Travel is doing a terrible job at personalization,” admits Bryan Batista, CEO, Skyscanner. On another panel, Kenneth Purcell, CEO and founder of iSeatz, said. “I don’t think we’re any better than we were in 2019 with personalization.”

But personalization can take on different forms. Google thinks it’s a step closer to solving the puzzle. Leveraging

content from search, flights, maps, Gmail, agents, rich web content, price and availability, Google believes it can provide a personalized experience. “Gemini is the LLM that stitches the content together,” said James Byers, Group Product Manager, Google.

Jason Wynn, CEO, Chase Travel, believes personalization is more about context and timing than anything else. “I think the idea of personalization ... gets a little overplayed,” he said. “The way we’re looking at it is how do we understand the broad category types of things a customer’s interested in... Can we give you a 20% discount and surface those opportunities at the right point in time?”





## NEW TECHNOLOGY, OLD ARGUMENT

The argument regarding who benefits the most from AI – suppliers or intermediaries – rages on. However, there is a general sentiment that OTAs still have the upper hand because of their brands, customers, data and deep pockets. And now they can be free of Google. “OTAs no longer have to rely on search engines, but can become one,” said Agoda’s Morgenshtern. No one was more emphatic about this topic than the formidable and provocative Barry Diller. “The search monopoly experience of Google is going to end,” he declared, though Google itself will continue to thrive in other ways.

There’s another camp that thinks suppliers have the upper hand, and three industry titans have bet on that: Sanjay Vakil, CEO and Cofounder, DirectBooker and investors Richard Holden (formerly Google) and Steve Kaufer (founder, Tripadvisor). They believe hotels will triumph in an AI-powered ecosystem because they have access to more detailed property data and OTAs don’t connect to every single property. According to Vakil, the value of AI is that it all “happens in one place,” and in one flow, and that “the best answers come from



suppliers” while OTAs are “pretty thin.” Even his former employer Google, he said, didn’t have access to loyalty rates or all the amenity content that hotels offer directly to consumers.

However, hotels’ past attempts at self-aggregation to circumvent OTAs have been challenging. “Is that [AI] enough to change the power of the aggregators, to change the front door of travel, the top funnel, the gatekeeper, and ultimately the aggregators themselves?,” challenged interviewer Chris Hemmeter, Managing Partner, Thayer Investment Partners. How suppliers can provide more helpful answers on AI-powered platforms remains to be seen.

While OTAs and TMCs may not be replaced, they will be forced to evolve. Discussing the impact that “predictive and proactive servicing” will have on travel management companies (TMCs), Steve Singh, Executive Chairman and CEO, Spotnana, said in next few years (could be two, could be five), “you’re going to have an agentic travel agent for life as an individual. It’ll be an expert on you.



It’ll be an expert on your family, expert on the company you work for, the TMC that serves you and every city and venue in the world.”

It is this anticipation of personal, digital agents that makes the future of travel so compelling, even if there is a few years’ wait before it all happens. “There is still no single solution,” admits Booking’s Ranson. Most speakers agree that travel is an array of processes, both legacy and AI-first, that remain interconnected in a single universe. And don’t discount the human part, either. “I am going to count on human folk walking around, thinking, talking and relating to each other,” concluded Diller.

Center Stage at The Phocuswright Conference covered an array of other topics, including the Asia market, social search, B2B, loyalty, business travel, payments and hotel tech. With the theme, Game On, it’s clear that everyone is in position, regardless of not knowing how it all plays out.

# Center Stage Overview

## Bryan Batista

CEO  
Skyscanner

## Robert Buckman

Senior Vice President, Solutions  
Consulting, Americas  
Amadeus

## James Byers

Group Product Manager, Search  
Google

## Mike Coletta

Senior Manager, Research and  
Innovation  
Phocuswright

## Gloria Colgan

SVP and Global Head of  
Product, Commercial Solutions  
Visa

## Pete Comeau

Managing Director  
Phocuswright

## Lennert de Jong

CEO  
citizenM

## Eric DeLange

Industry Director, US Head of  
Finance & Travel  
Reddit

## Barry Diller

Chairman and Senior Executive  
IAC

## Mariano Dima

Chairman  
Civitatis

## Kurt Ekert

CEO & President  
Sabre

## Geoff Freeman

President and CEO  
U.S. Travel Association

## Jake Fuller

Managing Director  
BTIG

## Neil Geurin

Vice President, Global Sales  
American Airlines

## Kristie Goshow

Former Chief Commercial  
Officer  
Peregrine Hospitality

## Layton Han

CEO  
Bonafide.ai

## Adam Harris

CEO & Co-Founder  
Cloudbeds

## David Hoctor

Vertical Director for Travel  
and Gaming, Global Business  
Solutions  
TikTok

## Richard Holden

Former General Manager  
Google Travel

## Jennifer Hsieh

Managing Vice President  
& Global Category Leader,  
Premium & Endorsed Brands  
Marriott International

## Paul Jacobs

GM & SVP, NORAM & APAC  
KAYAK

## Travis Katz

General Manager and Vice  
President, Shopping  
YouTube

## Steve Kaufer

Founder and Former CEO  
Tripadvisor

## Jeff Kim

CEO, Yanolja Cloud and Chief  
Strategy Officer  
Yanolja Group

## Evan Konwiser

Chief Product and Strategy  
Officer  
American Express Global  
Business Travel

## Dor Krubiner

CEO & Co-Founder  
Mize

## Al Lagunas

CEO  
Levee

## Clara Liang

Head of Global Strategic  
Operations  
Stripe

## Madeline List

Phocuswright

## Mark Mahaney

Senior Managing Director  
and Head of Internet Equity  
Research  
Evercore

## Melissa Maher

CEO and Founder  
Independent Consultant

## Kabir Maiga

CEO  
PassiveBolt

## Omri Morgenshtern

CEO  
Agoda

## Jean-Jacques Morin

Group Deputy CEO  
Accor

## Kimberly Newbury

VP, Sales  
Northstar Travel Group

## Wendy Olson Killion

CEO  
Rome2Rio

## Kenneth Purcell

Founder & CEO  
iSeatz

## Rob Ransom

Senior Vice President and Chief  
Strategy Officer  
Booking Holdings

## Alicia Schmid

Director of Research  
Phocuswright

## Steve Schwab

CEO  
Casago

## Sindhu Shekharan

AVP, Travel Solutions  
Sutherland

## Steve Singh

Executive Chairman and CEO  
Spotnana

## Dakota Smith

President and Co-Founder  
Hopper

## Mitra Sorrells

Senior Vice President, Content  
Phocuswright/PhocusWire

## Dave Stephenson

Chief Business Officer and Head  
of Employee Experience  
Airbnb

## Caroline Strachan

CEO  
Festive Road

## Emma Taylor

Managing Director, Global Head  
of Internet Investment Banking  
Barclays

## Sanjay Vakil

CEO and Co-Founder  
DirectBooker

## Sarosh Waghmar

Founder & Chief Product Officer  
Spotnana

## Lloyd Walmsley

Managing Director, Internet  
Equity Research  
Mizuho Securities

## Jennifer Watkins

Director, Payments  
ARC

## Jeff Wright

CEO, North America  
Allianz Partners

## Jason Wynn

CEO  
Chase Travel



# Innovation

## 2025 Innovation Launch Winners

The award winners of the latest Phocuswright Innovation Launch include Acai Travel (People's Choice Award) and BoomPop (Travel Innovator of the Year). Innovation Launch is the premier stage for global innovators to demonstrate new ideas that are set to change the travel industry.

Nine companies presented, and the winners represent the most promising of this elite group. The nine innovators represented scaleups and established companies introducing new products.

Since the Phocuswright's first Travel Innovation Summit in 2008, 662 innovators have participated in the company's innovation events. This esteemed group of Phocuswright Innovation alumni has brought countless innovations to the market. 505 of them have raised funding, adding up to over \$12.4B collectively and 136 have been acquired. View all of this year's innovators and the alumni [here](#).

PhocuswrightInnovation  
**LAUNCH**

PhocuswrightInnovation

WINNER: TRAVEL INNOVATION AWARD

**BoomPop**

RUNNER UP: TRAVEL INNOVATION AWARD

**Wenrix**

WINNER: PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

**açai**



# Innovators

## Innovation Launch: PhocusGroup

### Ellen Keszler

CEO  
Clear Sky Associates

### Marilyn Markham

VP AI & Automation Strategy  
American Express Global  
Business Travel

### Mike McCormick

Managing Partner  
Travel Again Advisory

### Erik Blachford

Founder  
Pine5 Ventures

### Suzanna Chiu

Head of Amadeus Ventures  
Amadeus

### Betsy Mule

Principal  
F-Prime Capital Partners

### Harshit Vaish

SVP, Corporate Development &  
Strategy  
Expedia Group

### Jim Hornthal

Chairman  
Launchpad Central

### Kurien Jacob

Partner  
Highgate Technology Ventures

### Cara Whitehill

Operating Partner  
Thayer Investment Partners

PhocuswrightInnovation<sup>?</sup>

## BY THE NUMBERS

Innovators

# 662

Raised

# \$12.4B+

FUNDED

# 505

ACQUIRED

# 136

(As of January 2025)



PhocuswrightInnovation<sup>?</sup>  
**LAUNCH**

25



# HOT TRAVEL STARTUPS 2026



# Startup Program

Pitching isn't everything, nor is it the only thing.

This private event - with participation only by acceptance - enabled startups to network with investors, industry experts and fellow travel tech startups, while Phocuswright helped facilitate one-on-one meetings. Relationships deepened at curated roundtable discussions, happy hours and throughout the conference.



## Mentors

### Jennifer Barnwell

President  
Curator Hotel & Resort  
Collection

### Beat Blaser

Co-Founder, Managing Partner  
Falkensteiner Ventures

### Gilad Berenstein

Founder  
Brook Bay Capital

### Michael Berk

Director of Strategic  
Partnerships and Innovation  
American Express Global  
Business Travel

### Gregg Brockway

Founder & Managing Partner  
Harbor Lane Partners

### Suzanna Chiu

Head of Amadeus Ventures  
Amadeus

### Rod Cuthbert

Board Member  
VELTRA Corp.

### Tedd Evers

Global Partner Leader, Travel &  
Hospitality  
Amazon Web Services (AWS)

### Filip Filipov

CEO  
OAG

### Joe Iriarte

Senior Director, Corporate  
Development  
Booking Holdings

### Ellen Keszler

CEO  
Clear Sky Associates

### Jordan Monahan

Managing Director  
FMZ Ventures

### Betsy Mule

Principal  
F-Prime Capital

### Andreas Nau

Partner  
Ennea Capital Partners

### Timothy O'Neill-Dunne

Principal  
T2Impact Ltd.

### Mat Orrego

CEO  
Cornerstone Information  
Systems

### Robert Rosenstein

Co-Founder & Chairman  
Agoda

### Edward Silver

Partner  
Travel Again Advisory

### Chelsea Salamone

VP  
Thayer Investment Partners

### Dorian Stonie

Senior Director Global Travel  
Salesforce

### Nino Tasca

Chief Product Officer  
Northstar Travel Group

### Kevin Tsang

Managing Director  
Amex

### Harshit Vaish

SVP, Corporate Development &  
Strategy  
Expedia Group

### Cara Whitehill

Operating Partner  
Thayer Investment Partners

### Christopher Zando

Head of Industry Solutions  
Skyscanner

# Young Leaders Summit

Each year, Phocuswright brings together the industry's best and brightest travel leaders aged 35 and under to be part of this elite group. The Young Leaders Summit program recognizes the brilliant minds shaping the future of the travel industry and is a launching pad for the next generation of travel luminaries to connect, debate and collaborate.



APPLY FOR THE  
2026 YOUNG LEADERS SUMMIT

## Speakers/ Mentors

### Rod Cuthbert

Founder  
Viator

### Stan Pawlow

Senior Data Analyst and  
Visualization Specialist  
Phocuswright

### Filip Filipov

Chief Executive Officer  
OAG

### Erik Blachford

Founder  
Pine5 Partners

### Chris Hemmeter

Managing Partner  
Thayer Investment Partners

### Robert Rosenstein

Co-Founder & Chairman  
Agoda

### Ellen Keszler

CEO  
Clear Sky Associates

### David Hocror

Director, Head of US Verticals  
TikTok

## Session Moderators

### Evan Konwiser

Chief Marketing and Strategy  
Officer  
American Express GBT

### Walter Buschta

SVP, Marketing  
Phocuswright

# Elevating & Amplifying the Voices of Female Founders

Phocuswright collaborated with Nina Kleaveland, CEO & Co-founder, Lanyard and Melissa Maher, CEO & Founder, Pinnacle Enterprises Group, for an exclusive opportunity to network over lunch, engage in intimate roundtable discussions, and participate in dynamic speed networking sessions.

This networking event brought together female founders, advisors, investors and allies in the hospitality industry to create a stronger community and share successes in the travel industry.

The goals of the Female Founders program:

- Elevate and amplify the voices of female founders in the travel technology industry, showcasing their contributions, innovations and leadership roles.
- Foster an inclusive environment where female founders can connect with peers, mentors, potential investors and industry stakeholders to build meaningful relationships and partnerships.
- Not only spotlight the contributions of female founders but also to create a sustainable ecosystem where they can thrive, collaborate and inspire others.



# Sponsors and Exhibitors

[A Bright Approach](#)

[AB Tasty](#)

[Acai Travel](#)

[Adyen](#)

[Afrishore](#)

[Airobot](#)

[AirWallex](#)

[Allianz](#)

[Amadeus](#)

[American Airlines](#)

[AMEX GBT](#)

[Attentive](#)

[Avalara](#)

[Belvera](#)

[Bill](#)

[Blue Ribbon Bags](#)

[Bonsai](#)

[BoomPop](#)

[Brex](#)

[Cambon](#)

[Civitatis](#)

[CodeGen](#)

[ConnexPay](#)

[Data Appeal](#)

[Deloitte](#)

[DoHop](#)

[Etraveli](#)

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[Gimmonix](#)

[HBX \(Hotelbeds\)](#)

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The  
Phocuswright<sup>?</sup>  
Conference

BY NORTHSTAR



**GAME  
ON**



# More Networking & Activities

## Industry Roundtables

When it comes to highly-targeted, small-group networking, Industry Roundtables offer the ultimate interest-based networking. Phocuswright curated these intimate, off-record curated roundtable discussions based on business interests, moderated by industry experts and Phocuswright analysts.

The roundtable discussions were an opportunity for attendees to meet like-minded peers and industry experts in an informal setting to examine issues as they relate to the table topic.

At a large, global event like The Phocuswright Conference, providing a forum for small groups was an important way to facilitate meaningful conversations and networking opportunities for participants. Conversations and networking opportunities for participants.

## Morning Yoga Classes and Community Run

Attendees embraced the dawn and began each day with a serene morning yoga session or a refreshing run on the San Diego waterfront as the sun casts its first rays over the water.

These activities were crafted to welcome participants of all skill levels. It encouraged each participant to seize this opportunity to forge meaningful connections with fellow speakers and attendees in an atmosphere of communal well-being.

## Exclusive Master Class - A New Era for Hotel Sales, Distribution & Operations: The AI Revolution

This masterclass equipped hotel general managers, operators and marketers with the knowledge and strategic insights needed to integrate AI technologies into their service operations, enhancing guest experiences and optimizing internal processes. Participants learned how AI can drive personalization, streamline operations, boost revenue, and redefine marketing in the hospitality sector.

The session empowered managers to navigate the ethical and practical challenges of AI adoption, preparing them to lead AI-driven transformations within their hotels. Through real-world case studies and interactive discussions, attendees gained actionable strategies to implement AI, foster an AI-ready culture, and stay ahead of industry trends, positioning their hotels for success in the evolving hospitality landscape.

## Special Interest Lunches

This year, Phocuswright offered special spaces dedicated to meeting Phocuswright analysts, segments like tours and activities, Young Leaders and Female Founders. It's part of our dedication to providing small-group networking that's targeted and beneficial during the larger conference.

## New Leadership for a New Age

The workplace has changed—and so have the expectations of top talent. Flexibility, trust, and purpose-driven work are now essential.

This interactive session brought together industry leaders for small-group mentorship and a dynamic panel discussion focused on future-proofing teams, navigating uncertainty, and leading with agility.

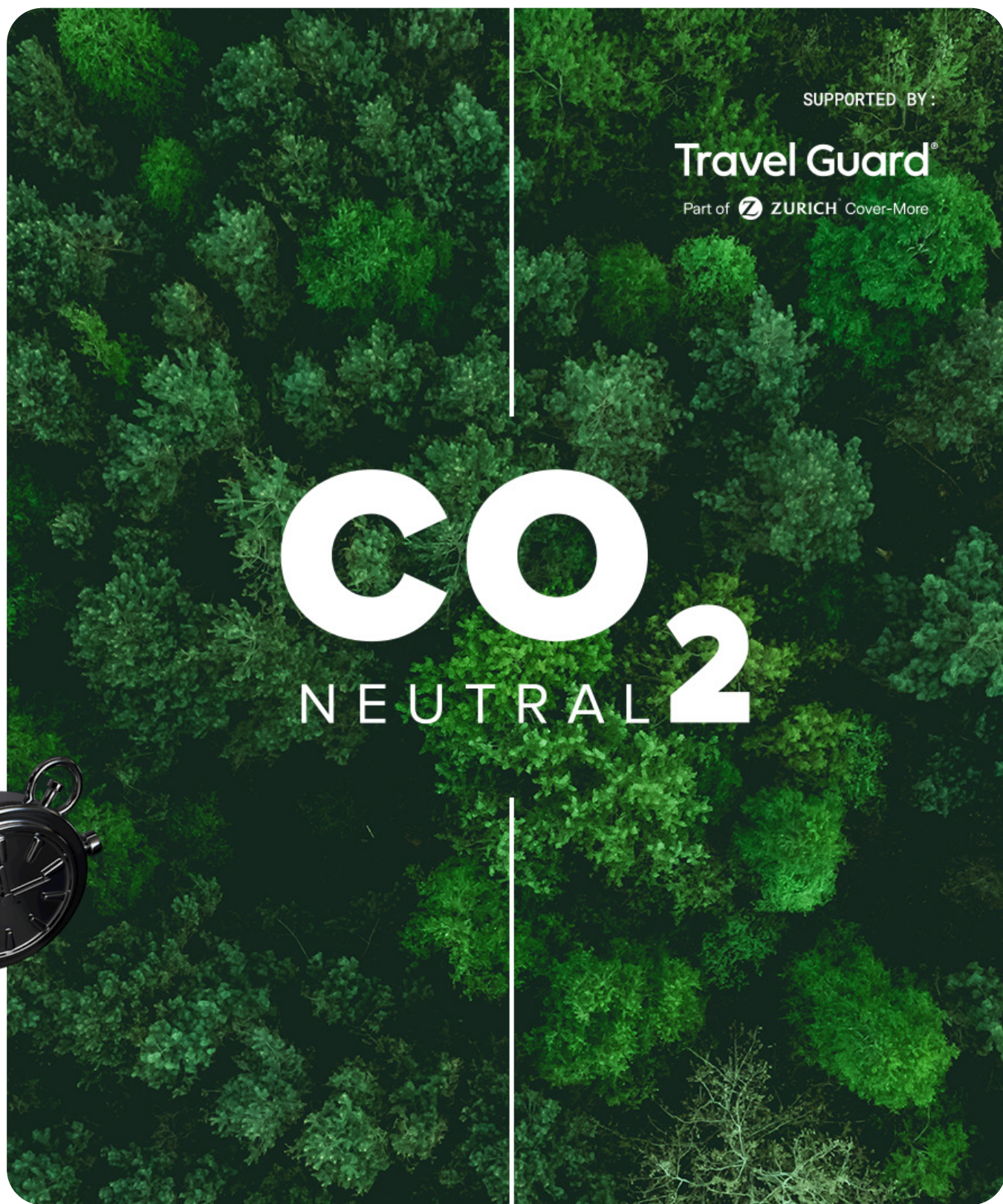
Attendees left with fresh perspectives, valuable connections, and actionable strategies to turn change into opportunity—and ensure their organizations are built for growth and success in the new era of work.



# A Carbon Neutral Event

Doing the right thing for the environment is a no-brainer. For eight consecutive events, we've offset our entire carbon footprint, with the support of our partner Travel Guard, including waste, power and water usage, food and beverage and transportation emissions of every attendees. In 2025, it was an offset of 4,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Phocuswright is committed to being a leader in environmentally conscious events by taking proactive, voluntary measures.



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NEUTRAL 2

# 2025 Phocuswright Hall of Fame

Phocuswright's Hall of Fame inductees led the way for many of today's titans. The very epitome of trailblazers, they continue to inspire the travel industry and make a profound impact.

This year, Phocuswright inducted two new members to the Hall of Fame:



**Erik Blachford**

FOUNDER  
PINE5 VENTURES



**Richard Barton**

FOUNDER & FORMER CEO  
EXPEDIA

CO-FOUNDER & CO-EXECUTIVE CHAIR  
ZILLOW GROUP

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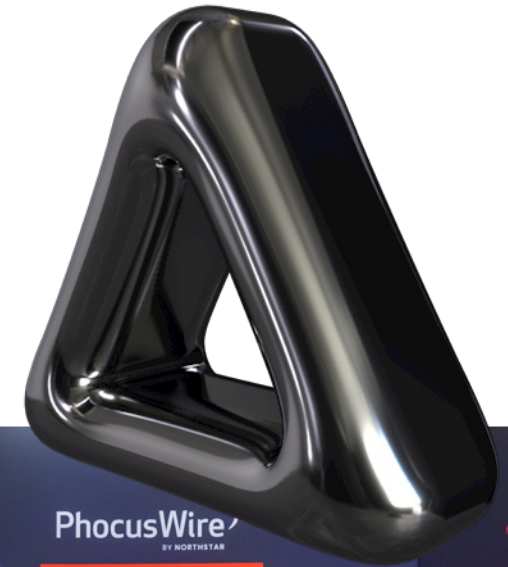
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# PhocusWire Studio



With prime real estate within the conference, the PhocusWire editorial team conducted over 40 interviews with the most innovative companies and leaders, digging deep into the stories, profiles and strategies that will help chart the future of our steadfast but always-evolving industry.

The PhocusWire team even flexed their journalistic interview skills on Center Stage, moderating Executive Interviews and Roundtables with their unique skills and style.



SEE ALL OF THE INTERVIEWS HERE

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