



AI & Travel Playbook

Capture "conversational travel planning" and convert it:
from prompt to booking

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Introduction: The Conversational Travel Shift

Travel planning behavior has changed. Travelers are no longer satisfied with typing "ski resort French Alps" into a search bar. They now formulate hyper-contextual and complex queries to artificial intelligences such as ChatGPT, Gemini, or Perplexity:

"We're a family of four with kids aged 6 and 9, looking for a ski resort in the French Alps in February, ski-in/ski-out, with a kids' club, for a budget of €2,500 for the week."

A recent McKinsey* study shows that **50% of consumers reported using GenAI to learn about a product or category or to discover brands and get inspiration.** Travel is at the forefront of this shift: Phocuswright** reports that **56% of U.S. leisure travelers used AI for at least one trip over the past 12 months - up from 43% only nine months earlier - the fastest behavioral shift the travel industry has seen in a decade.**

At the same time, **travelers are not ready to let AI make the booking decision.** According to a Gartner*** study, only 11% of consumers are willing to let AI make purchase decisions, and Booking.com**** finds that only 35% of travelers fully trust AI outputs. This means bookings still happen on your website.

💡 Key Facts :

The end of the clickable link monopoly: Generative AIs directly recommend precise destinations and experiences with their sources.

High booking intent: A traveler who submits a complex, constrained query to an AI is much closer to booking than one running a generic search. AI-influenced visitors demonstrate double the engagement.

The destination challenge: If your destination is not cited by LLMs, you become invisible to a growing share of the market. Beware of double disintermediation! The planning journey may begin with LLMs, but the booking must happen on your site.

Beware of double disintermediation! Travel brands have spent a decade fighting OTAs for direct bookings. AI assistants now add a second layer of intermediation. The planning journey may begin with LLMs, but the booking and the direct relationship with your guest must happen on your site and through the engagements that follow.



How can you optimize your travel site so that AI systems select and recommend your destination and offers?

01



Master the pillars to be
cited by AI

The world of travel distribution is facing radical change. The challenge is no longer simply to attract traditional search engine algorithms or to out-bid OTAs on brand keywords, but to become an indisputable, citable and structured source of authority for Large Language Models (LLMs) and Artificial Intelligence.

To succeed in 2026, the optimization of a travel or destination site must be based on a comprehensive approach that combines traditional SEO with the new requirements of AI.

For your destination and offers to be recommended by artificial intelligence, your content strategy must imperatively be based on two complementary pillars:

Traditional SEO: Contrary to popular belief, classic SEO remains the foundation of AI SEO. Market research shows that pages ranked first in traditional organic results have a 25% chance of being cited as a source in Google's AI Overviews modules.

AI SEO: Also known as AEO or GEO, this is the art of optimizing your content for large language models (LLMs) or AI Overviews, that synthesise complex information. AI SEO encourages the creation of nuanced, conversational and multi-perspective content to influence AI travel recommendations, but also providing short, factual and immediate answers to travelers' questions.



Concrete strategies for optimizing your destination and offer pages

To scale up this visibility, your travel site must adopt a structure suited to LLM indexing bots.

a. Targeting intents in the form of "Prompts"

Travelers no longer type simple keywords like "ski holidays Alps". They enter complex prompts that match real intent: *"Which ski resort in the French Alps is best for a family with young children in February, ski-in/ski-out, with a kids' club, for under €2,500 a week?"*

Your destination guides, seasonal content, practical FAQs and itineraries must be written in natural language to **exactly match these intents**. Covering more facts : snow reliability by month, transfer times from the nearest airports, equipment rental, accessibility, family services... means matching more real-world intents and ranking for the long-tail prompts that come with them. **You need to focus on solving real travelers' planning problems and answer them with good, optimized content.**

b. Data structuring and multi-source data

Als do not read your site like a human; they compile data that needs to be displayed within your destination pages, accommodation pages and content.

Schema.org: Your key specifications (rates, real-time availability, guest reviews, opening dates, amenities) must be perfectly implemented using travel-specific types : LodgingBusiness, TouristDestination, Event, Offer, FAQPage, as it supports SEO and, indirectly, AI SEO as well.

The omni-channel approach: LLMs cross-reference sources to validate information. To impose your destination, your site's authority must also be relayed externally: recommendations in travel media, destination videos on YouTube, verified reviews on TripAdvisor and Google, traveler communities on Reddit or dedicated forums... Every piece of the web is important!



Tracking AI visibility and
scaling up semantic
precision with Positive
Surfer

a. Tracking AI Visibility

Before you can optimize for LLMs, you need to know where you currently stand in their answers, and most destinations and travel brands have no visibility into this at all. **Tracking AI Visibility means systematically monitoring how, where, and how often your destination and offers appear across generative engines** (ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, Gemini...).

Concretely, this means answering questions on an ongoing basis: Is your site cited as a source? Which pages get pulled into AI-generated answers, and for which prompts : “family ski resort February”, “best snow conditions April”? Which competing destinations are AI-recommended instead of yours? Are your specific stays and experiences recommended?

This also means **identifying where LLMs go to build their answers:** which external domains, channels and communities (TripAdvisor, YouTube, Reddit, review platforms, travel blogs...) get cross-referenced most often for your category, so you know where to build presence beyond your own site.

This is precisely **the tracking layer Positive Surfer automates:** instead of manually testing prompts one by one, it monitors your AI visibility at scale, flags the prompts where you're absent, and identifies the content gaps to close. You then act on these gaps with semantic precision.



b. Scaling semantic precision

The key to being selected by AIs lies in the semantic relevance of your content. Generative engines analyze entity density to judge whether your page is an authority on its subject, your resort, your region, your season. This is where a tool like Positive Surfer becomes essential for automating and measuring this precision on a large scale:

The Entity Coverage: It analyzes whether you cover all topics and entities you should. By covering more than 80% of the NLP (Natural Language Processing) entities suggested by Surfer, a site sees its chances of being cited by LLMs increase by +34%.

The Content Score: This score analyzes how optimized the content is for both SEO and LLM. Surfer demonstrates that pages achieving an optimization score above 75 are 2.1 times more likely to be included in AI search module citations.

The overall business impact:

By rationalizing this semantic approach, travel brands relying on AI optimization record an average of:

156%
more indexed pages

89%
increase in their organic
conversion rate, according to
market benchmarks

AI SEO does not just generate traffic; it attracts travelers at the moment of their booking decision.



Transforming, engaging and
converting travelers with the
same precision as AI

02



Ensuring experience
continuity with booking
intent

Once the traveler clicks on the link recommended by the LLM and arrives on your website, **they expect an experience that is just as seamless and personalized.**

The hardest part is yet to come: maintaining the continuity of their intent across a consideration cycle that, in travel, can stretch over days or weeks. A traveler accustomed to AI-driven personalisation will not tolerate a generic browsing experience on your booking site.

Decoding weak
signals in real time

The greatest danger post-click is a break in the experience. If a visitor arrives via a recommendation based on a precise need, your site must immediately prove they are in the right place.

Dynamic contextual onboarding: By detecting the source (the AI engine or original query), the site instantly adapts its welcome elements.

To engage travelers accurately, you need to be able to read between the lines of their behaviour. Real-time tracking enables you to identify points of friction before they lead to booking abandonment, such as:

- **Hesitation analysis:** A visitor who stagnates on the booking summary for 45 seconds, or scrolls three times through the “Cancellation policy” section, expresses silent doubt — about dates, flexibility, or what is really included in the package.
- **Proactive micro-interaction:** Instead of cluttering the screen, the site triggers a help bubble or a surgical reassurance message at the exact moment the cursor shows signs of freezing: free cancellation terms, snow guarantee, what the pass includes. This is the art of removing booking barriers in real time.

Many other use cases are possible!

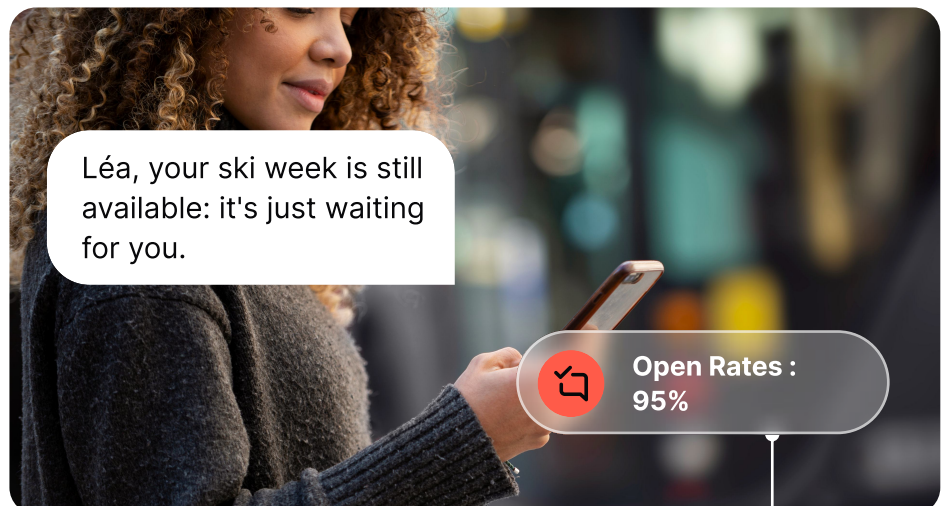
Contextualised
omnichannel orchestration:
driving bookings

The travel planning journey is fragmented and longer than in most industries. A stay is rarely booked in one session: travelers compare, consult their partner or family, and come back. The user may leave the site, but their original intention (their initial prompt) remains in their mind. This is where the complementary nature of the channels comes into play, to re-engage the traveler wherever they are:

- **Web push notifications:** Ideal for re-engaging visitors who haven't yet provided their email address, with just one click in their browser.
- **Email:** Ideal for sending itinerary inspiration, practical pre-stay guides or destination storytelling that nurtures the decision over several days.
- **WhatsApp & SMS:** Direct messaging channels for date-driven availability alerts or completing a booking directly on a mobile.

To ensure conversion, it is essential to incorporate hyper-personalisation into these interactions. **Segmentation based on detected real-time signals ensures a seamless experience and engages the traveler across all channels**, based on their past interactions and in line with their booking intent.

That is when the magic happens, when the 'aha' moment occurs and the booking is confirmed.





Scale up your hyper-personalised engagement with Positive User

Detecting weak signals and orchestrating campaigns across three or four different channels cannot be done manually at the scale of a destination or booking site. For this level of precision to become a driver of growth, the use of a customer engagement platform such as **Positive User becomes essential.**

- **Real-time data unification:** Positive User instantly centralizes on-site behavior data for all visitors, even anonymous visitors (visit origin, stays and dates consulted...) to create an ultra-precise traveler profile in real time.
- **Personalized engagements, without technical friction:** No more need to solicit technical teams to code complex tracking scripts for every behavior. From a visual and intuitive interface, you easily configure your engagement scenarios. The platform then takes over to capture real-time signals and trigger the right message at the exact moment the business rule is validated.
- **The omnichannel orchestrator:** Positive User centralizes the management of web push notifications, email, SMS and WhatsApp within a single interface. The workflow adapts dynamically: if Léa opens the web push notification, the WhatsApp follow-up is automatically cancelled to avoid marketing fatigue.

The business impact:

By automating engagement based on the real intentions of travelers, brands deploying Positive User **see a reduction in booking abandonment rate and a lasting increase in repeat direct bookings** — reclaiming margin from OTAs thanks to targeted and non-intrusive interactions.

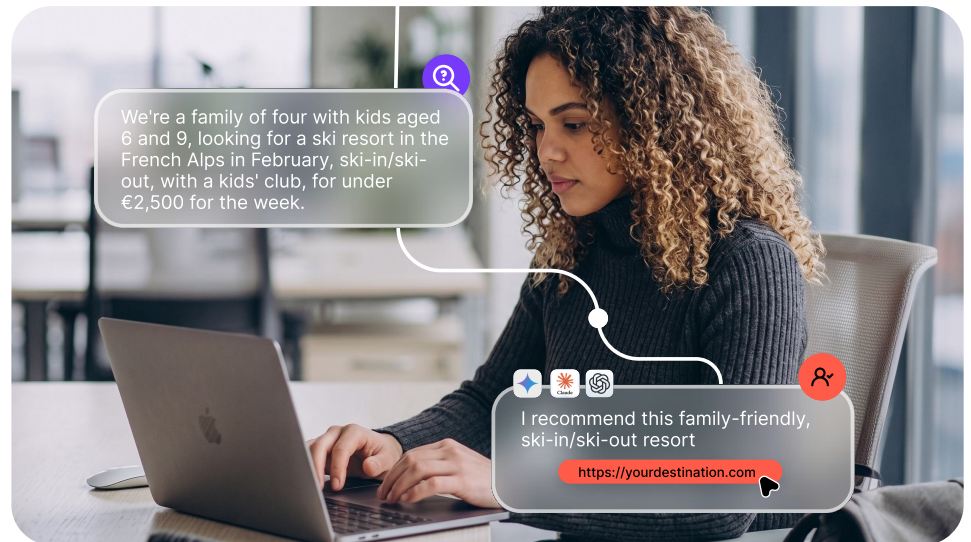


Concrete Case: Ensuring an AI search reaches a confirmed booking

03

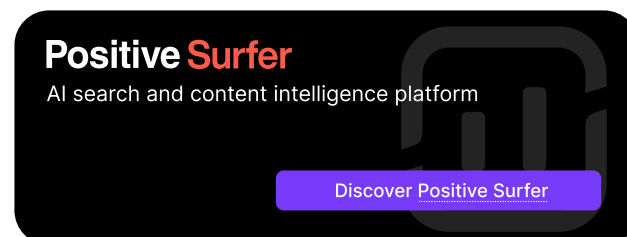
To understand the synergy between conversational travel planning and on-site conversion, let's follow the journey of Léa, 38, planning a family ski week.

Critical Moment n°1: The LLM search

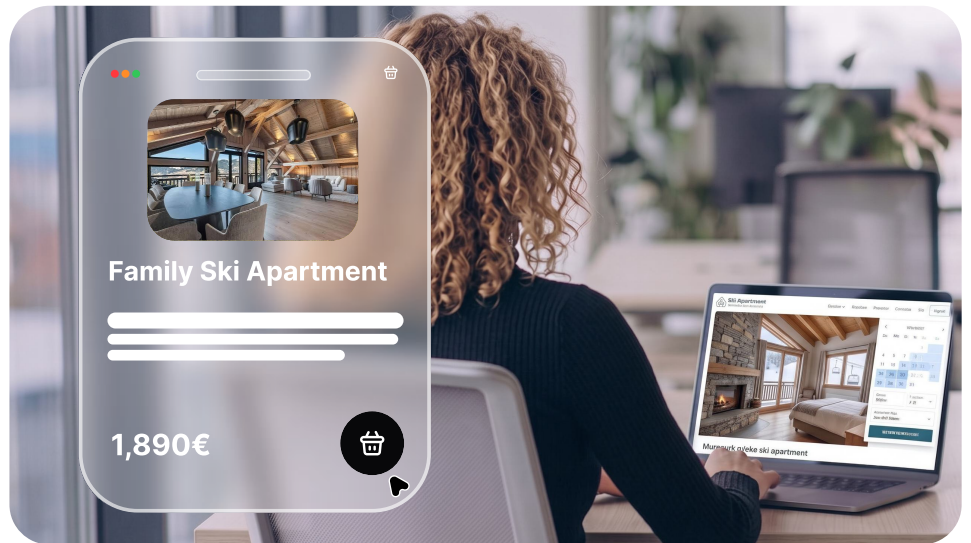


Behavior: Léa asks ChatGPT to recommend the best resort for her family's specific needs and dates.

The solution: Thanks to the semantic optimization of the site (AI SEO), the AI picks up your destination and includes a direct link to your booking site, not to an OTA listing.



Critical Moment n°2: Landing on the site



Behavior: Léa arrives on the resort page. She expects personalization.

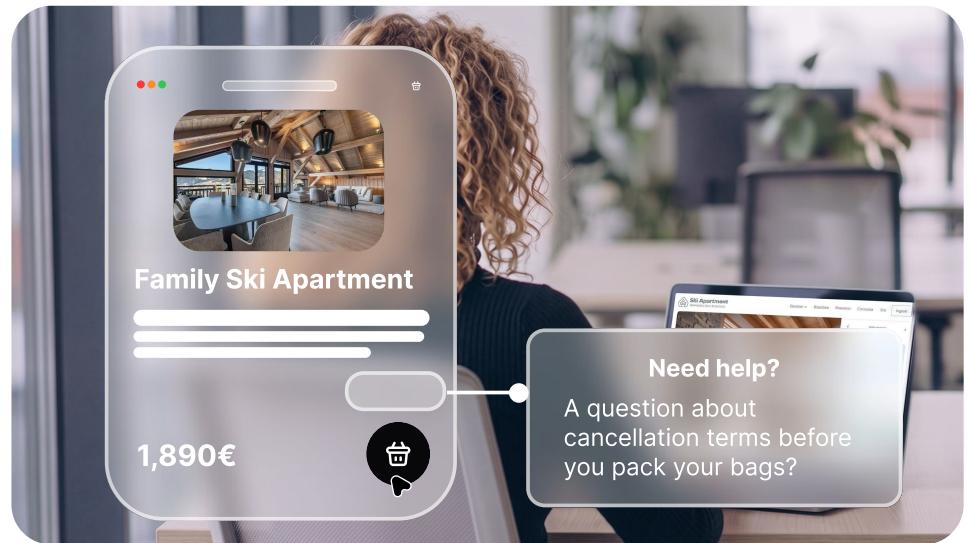
The solution: The marketing automation platform detects the source (the AI engine) and adapts the welcome message: highlighting kids' club availability for her dates, ski school for ages 6 and 9, and family apartment layouts.

Positive User

Customer engagement & emailing platform

Discover [Positive User](#)

Critical Moment n°3: Booking hesitation



Behavior: Léa selects the apartment and dates but hesitates for 45 seconds on the booking summary, scrolling repeatedly through the cancellation policy — what if it doesn't snow, what if a child gets sick?

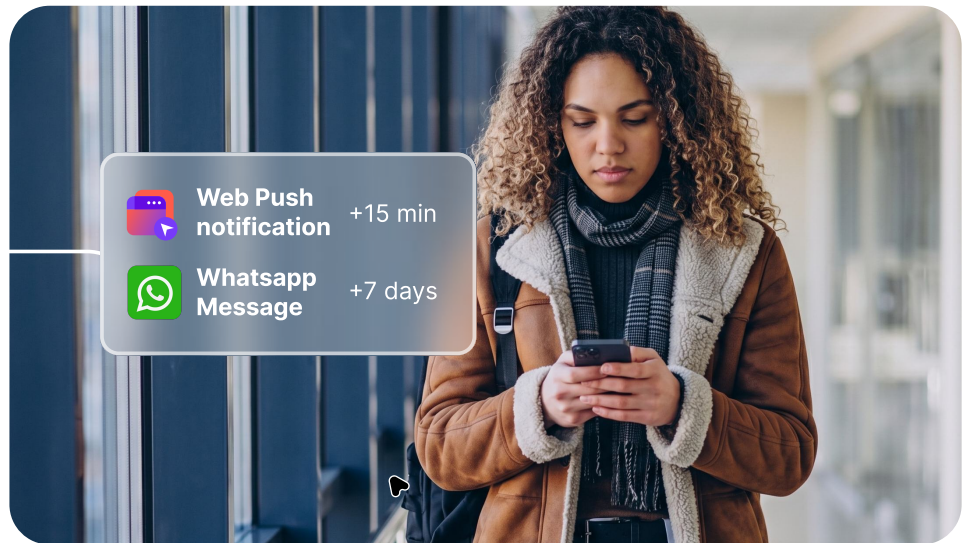
The solution: Real-time tracking detects this abnormal immobility. The site automatically triggers a proactive help bubble. Léa can then ask her question to support or consult the dynamic FAQ — free cancellation up to 14 days, snow guarantee included.

Positive User

Customer engagement & emailing platform

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Critical Moment n°4: Abandonment due to distraction



Behavior: Léa's kids come home from school, she closes her laptop and wants to talk it over with her partner. The booking is suspended.

The solution: The omni-channel scenario takes over: a Web Push at +15 min, then a WhatsApp message at +7 days ("Your apartment is still available — only 2 left for your dates"). Léa confirms the booking on her mobile.

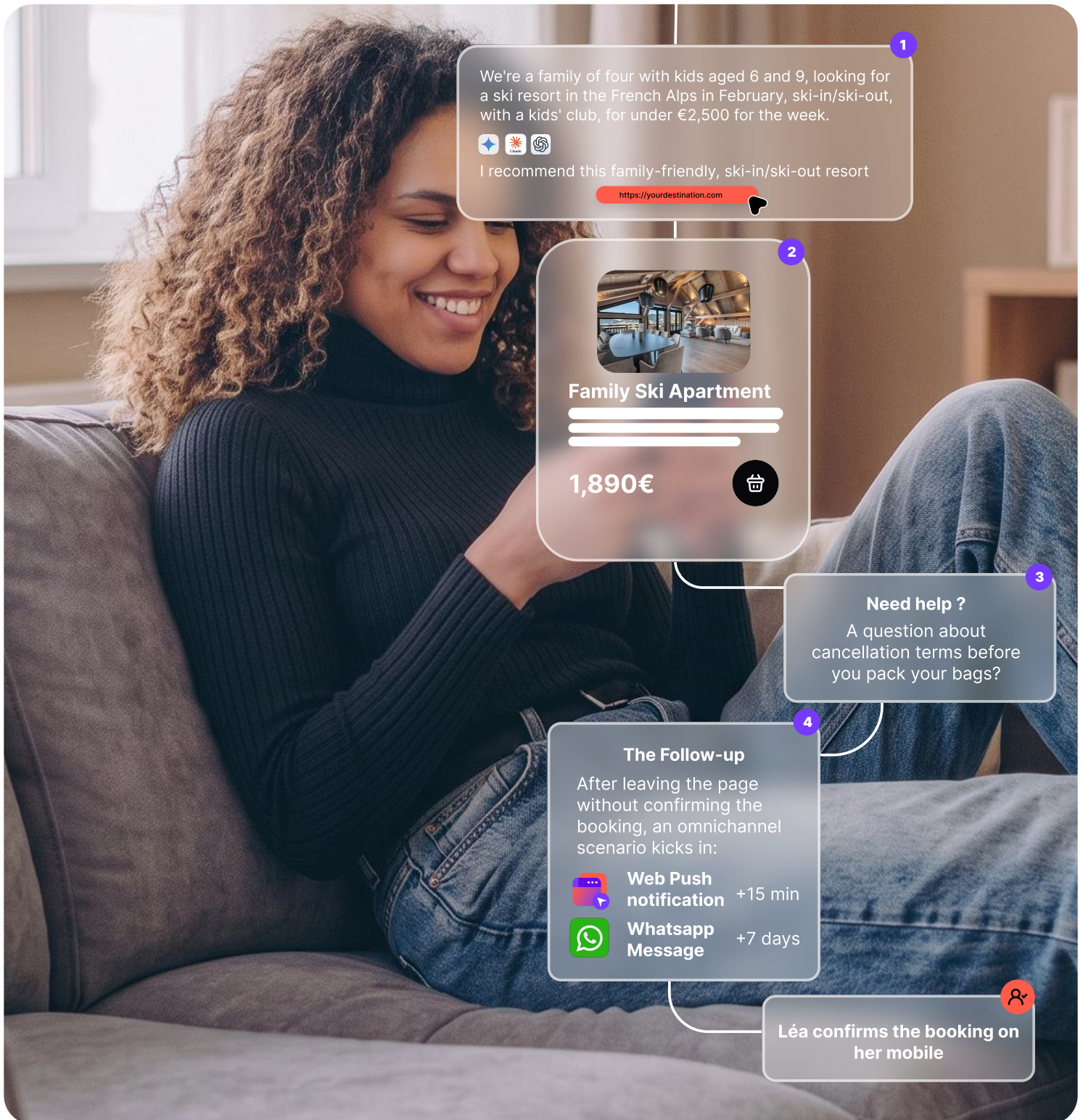
Positive User

Customer engagement & emailing platform

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Being found, welcomed, reassured, followed up with: every step counts. Positive Surfer ensures visibility, Positive User turns interest into a confirmed booking. Conversion depends on the whole chain, from search to stay.





Conclusion: Being visible AND precise throughout the traveler journey

The transition to GEO and conversational travel planning is not only a technical evolution; it is a complete paradigm shift. Attracting travelers with high booking intent through semantic optimization is just the first step.

The real competitive advantage for travel brands lies in their ability to capture this hyper-precise intent and guide the traveler seamlessly through to the confirmed booking — and the stay itself, combining semantic power with real-time customer engagement. In a market squeezed by OTAs, every direct booking recovered is margin and guest data reclaimed.

Positive is the only ecosystem capable of ensuring this complete cycle: guaranteeing your visibility on LLMs (via Positive Surfer), and converting visitors into loyal, returning guests through hyper-personalised engagement across all channels (via Positive User). Together, these solutions transform every conversational interaction into one that maximises your chances of a booking.

[Request a demo](#)

