



CASE STUDY:

HOW GENERATIVE AI IS RESHAPING EXECUTIVE HIRING IN HOSPITALITY

A Quarterly Publication on AI's Role in Talent Management

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THE STATE OF GENERATIVE AI IN TALENT MANAGEMENT FOR HOTEL
SALES, MARKETING AND REVENUE MANAGEMENT

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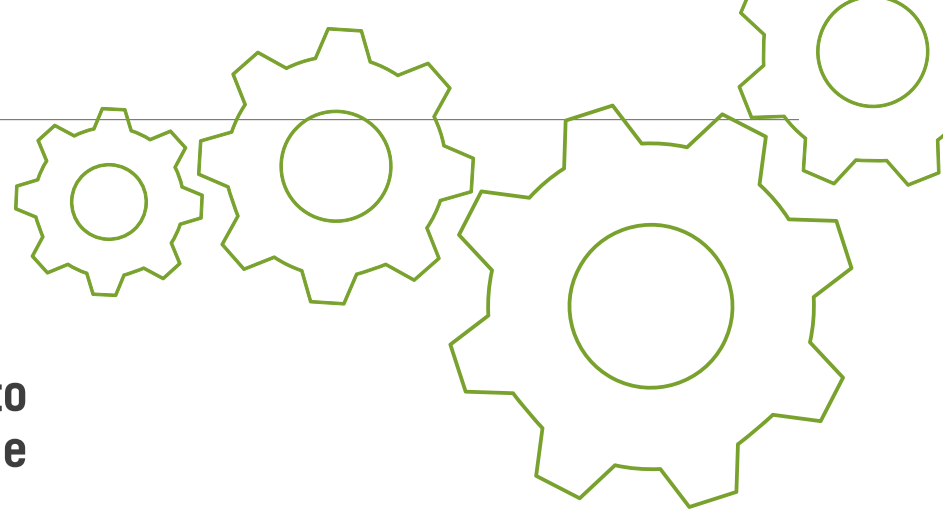


Supporter Level



How Generative AI Is Reshaping Executive Hiring in Hospitality

Exploring how hospitality recruiters use AI tools to accelerate searches, expand insights, and surface nontraditional talent, featuring a case study from SearchWide Global.



The hospitality industry is under pressure to adapt. As guest expectations evolve and commercial disciplines converge, executive hiring strategies must adjust just as quickly.

In 2024, the HSMAI Foundation released *The State of Generative AI in Talent Management for Hotel Sales, Marketing, and Revenue Management*. The research explored how generative AI is influencing recruitment, professional development, and retention across commercial roles. Recruitment emerged as one of the most immediate areas where generative AI could drive transformation. Few firms illustrate this more clearly than SearchWide Global.

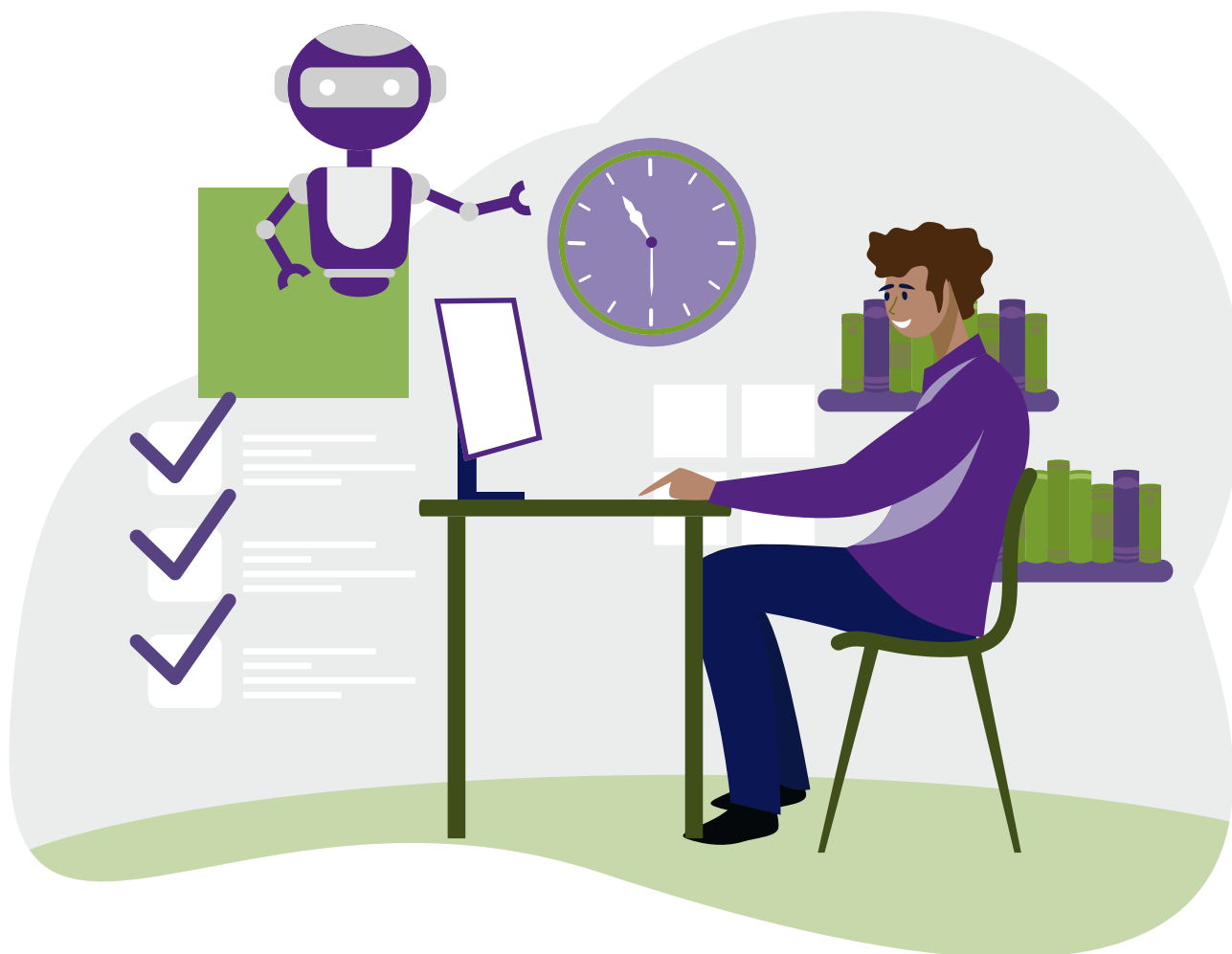
SearchWide Global is a full-service executive search firm for the travel, tourism, hospitality, association, venue, and experiential marketing sectors. Specializing in C-level and senior leadership placements across both public and private organizations, the firm has integrated generative AI tools into its executive search methodology. This case provides a lens into how AI-generated insights are accelerating searches, broadening candidate pools, and redefining what effective leadership looks like.

Generative AI Compresses the Search Lifecycle

Traditionally, compiling 25 years of executive search data into position overviews, market analyses, and interview summaries required weeks of effort from a cross-functional team. With generative AI, SearchWide Global now completes these steps in hours.

By using large language models and fine-tuned AI tools, the firm automates the synthesis of prior placements, emerging role requirements, and market-aligned language. These tools generate first-draft scorecards, create structured evaluation frameworks, and instantly compare resumes to dynamic job specifications. As a result, research and development workloads have been reduced by 60 to 80 percent. Recruiters can now spend more time on stakeholder collaboration and candidate alignment.

The staffing impact is significant. A recruiter who once needed additional support can now manage multiple concurrent searches with the help of AI. The process scales without adding headcount, creating new operational capacity.



This aligns with broader adoption trends. Today, 44 percent of organizations are using AI hiring tools for recruitment and talent acquisition, and 75 percent of recruiters say AI can cut resume screening time by up to half (ATC). For larger organizations, the integration of natural language processing, predictive analytics, and computer vision can cut time-to-hire by as much as 86 percent (ATC).

How Generative AI Expands Insight

SearchWide Global leverages AI for deeper pattern recognition, richer benchmarking, and real-time generation of role-specific insights. Instead of static resumes or keyword scans, AI enables more dynamic comparisons.

For example, AI can analyze historical interview data to identify leadership behaviors that align with long-term success. These insights are used to update scorecards and craft interview prompts that better reflect the employer's strategic goals.



Recruiters also use AI to create candidate summaries that reflect a company's values, success metrics, and transformation priorities. These adapt as the hiring context shifts, improving clarity and decision-making.

Across industries, 51 percent of organizations now report using AI in recruiting, making it the top HR function where AI is applied (SHRM 2025 Talent Trends).

Momentum is growing quickly. Thirty-eight percent of HR leaders are piloting or implementing generative AI, up from 19 percent just six months earlier (Gartner 2024). Their top use cases include employee-facing chatbots (43 percent), administrative task automation (42 percent), and recruiting applications such as job descriptions and skills data (41 percent).



Generative AI and the Evolution of Executive Roles

SearchWide Global's AI-driven analysis of thousands of job descriptions revealed a measurable shift in leadership expectations. Compared to past norms, 30 to 40 percent of current executive job specs now emphasize analytics fluency, systems thinking, and digital adaptability.

These expectations align with broader findings. Between 35 and 45 percent of companies have adopted AI in hiring (SHRM), and 86 percent of recruiters using AI say it accelerates the process (SHRM). Executives in sales, marketing, and revenue are increasingly expected to integrate AI into forecasting, segmentation, and reporting. Even outside technical roles, leaders are now expected to demonstrate AI literacy and manage AI-augmented teams.

Because generative AI can instantly adjust role descriptions, SearchWide ensures that every search reflects current market needs rather than relying on outdated templates.

Surfacing Nontraditional Talent

One of the most transformative uses of AI in SearchWide's process is its ability to identify candidates from nontraditional backgrounds. Individuals from SaaS, logistics, or retail who might have been overlooked are now surfaced for executive roles.

Instead of screening by title or industry, SearchWide's AI models evaluate leadership capabilities and behavioral traits. Candidate briefs highlight adaptability, innovation potential, and leadership style. This reframing expands the quality and diversity of the candidate pool.



A New Evaluation Approach

AI also reshapes evaluation. SearchWide uses generative AI to craft customized interview questions to address each client's leadership challenges and business needs.

These questions assess adaptability, data usage, and communication style, all of which are key success factors in AI-augmented teams. By shifting from resume-based to behavior-based evaluation, recruiters ensure a more consistent, strategic process. Every candidate is assessed against the same criteria, and every interview produces structured data for final decision-making.

Generative AI Improves Hiring Outcomes

SearchWide Global is beginning to see early gains from its AI-enabled framework. These include improved candidate-to-role fit, clearer expectations, and stronger cross-functional alignment.

Internally, the firm is developing dashboards and templates powered by the same AI models that support searches. These tools will provide ongoing insights into post-hire performance and organizational impact.

These outcomes mirror broader industry statistics. Eighty-five percent of employers using automation or AI report that it saves time and increases efficiency (SHRM). AI-driven engagement platforms are also helping identify cohorts of employees at risk of attrition up to 50 percent before they leave (ATC).

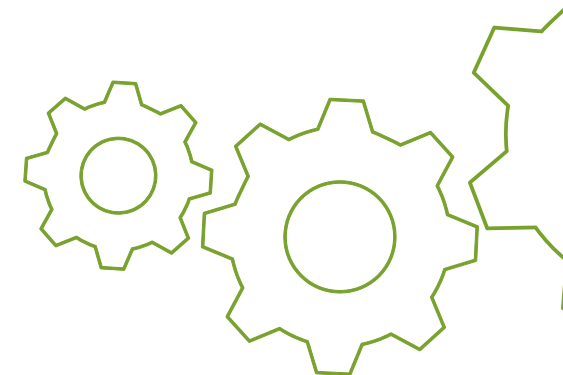
What Candidates Can Learn

For candidates, the lesson is clear. Generative AI is changing what “qualified” means. Credentials still matter, but so do adaptability, digital fluency, and the ability to lead in AI-augmented environments.

Candidates preparing for executive hospitality roles should:

- Build AI literacy to understand and lead AI-integrated teams.
- Communicate strategic insights through data.
- Show agility in cross-functional leadership.

SearchWide encourages candidates to present outcome-based narratives that demonstrate how they think, lead, and adapt. In an AI-informed search, fluency in digital transformation is as critical as title or tenure.





About the Foundation

The Foundation's mission is to elevate the overall caliber and performance of sales, marketing and revenue management professionals in the global hospitality industry by driving initiatives that will attract new talent, develop emerging talent, and engage existing talent. The work of the Foundation is supported by private donations and corporate talent partners. The HSMaI Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization established in 1983 to serve as the research and educational arm of the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International. Visit hsmaifoundation.org for more information.



About the Author

Michael J. Goldrich is the founder and chief advisor of Vivander Advisors, specializing in generative AI education and digital transformation strategies. With over 20 years of experience in hospitality and technology, he currently serves as Chief Experience Officer at The Hotels Network, leveraging AI and predictive analytics to enhance guest engagement and conversions. As co-leader of GAIN's AI Hospitality practice, he drives revenue growth and cost savings through AI integration. Goldrich also serves on the HSMaI Foundation Board. A recognized industry leader, Goldrich was named one of HSMaI's Top 25 Extraordinary Minds in 2020 in Sales, Marketing, and Revenue Optimization and has received multiple Adrian Awards for innovative campaigns. He is the creator of an AI Literacy Program that helps hospitality professionals integrate AI into workflows and frequently speaks on AI and digital transformation. Goldrich holds degrees from the University of Michigan and Northwestern University and has refined digital strategies for Accenture, Starwood, and Wyndham, shaping the future of AI in hospitality.