

Helping small businesses win with AI

8.9.2026 - Lisa Gevelber | Google Italia

Last month, Grow with Google hit Route 66 with our “Make AI Work for You” tour. We brought hands-on AI training to small business owners across five states, teaching them practical ways to save time, boost sales, and grow their teams.

Small businesses have always been the backbone of our economy and the hearts of our communities. Having worked alongside local entrepreneurs most of my career, I am always keen to help. Ahead of Route 66’s official centennial this November, Grow with Google took to the historic highway on a special mission: helping local business owners along the route put AI to work.

Throughout August, our AI training workshop tour for small businesses, “Make AI Work for You,” stopped in five states along the Mother Road: Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, Arizona, and California. In partnership with local chambers of commerce and Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), we brought hands-on, practical AI workshops directly to entrepreneurs.

Hundreds of local business owners and community members joined us to work through everyday tasks, showing how AI can help them grow their businesses and give them back hours a week. Data from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce shows that 85% of the small businesses who use AI saw an increase in sales over the past year and 82% grew their teams.¹

Across every stop, local entrepreneurs and independent business owners brainstormed ways to solve operational challenges, manage their daily workloads, and discover new ideas. As one participant shared:

While our journey along Route 66 has wrapped up, learning how to use AI doesn’t stop here. We continue to offer the Google AI Professional Certificate training at no cost to U.S. small businesses. This program includes our newest vibe coding course. Designed to help anyone become a builder, this course walks you through how to plan, test, debug, and launch custom apps for your business using everyday language, no coding knowledge needed.

Whether you joined us on Route 66 or are taking your first step today, you can explore free courses and resources anytime at [Grow.Google/SMB](https://grow.google/smb).

<https://blog.google/company-news/outreach-and-initiatives/grow-with-google/route-66-small-businesses>