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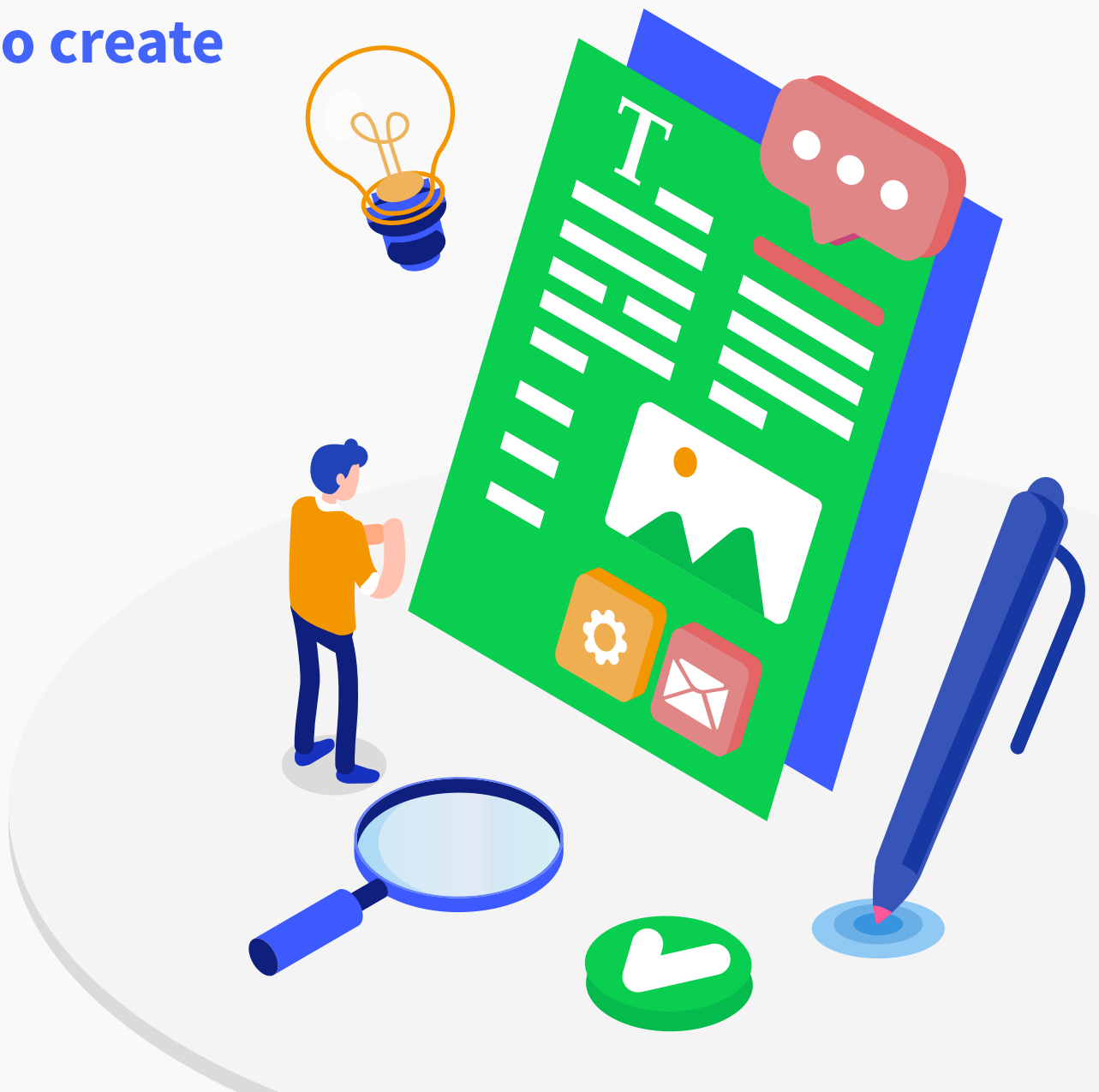
Episode 1
How to create

How to content:
an introduction

The inflo.Ai way

Publishing really good content is tough.

Really, really tough.

It's tough to write, tough to find and tough to share.
Particularly when you begin every working day with an
ever-lengthening to-do list, a blocked-out meeting calendar
and an overflowing email inbox.

As a result, thousands of companies simply don't have the
resources to create truly optimised blog content that builds
their organic following and generates new business leads.

Even worse, thousands solely rely on expensive paid ad
campaigns and SEO agency retainers.

We don't think that's fair.

So, in the first in our series of weekly blogs focusing on
'How to' content, we give you: 'How to content'.

Each week, we'll be taking you through a phase in the
content journey, from prioritising and planning to nuts and
bolts writing and publishing.

Our job is to make the internet fairer for everyone by
helping people create original content that helps them
make more revenue.

Time to put our money where our mouth is.

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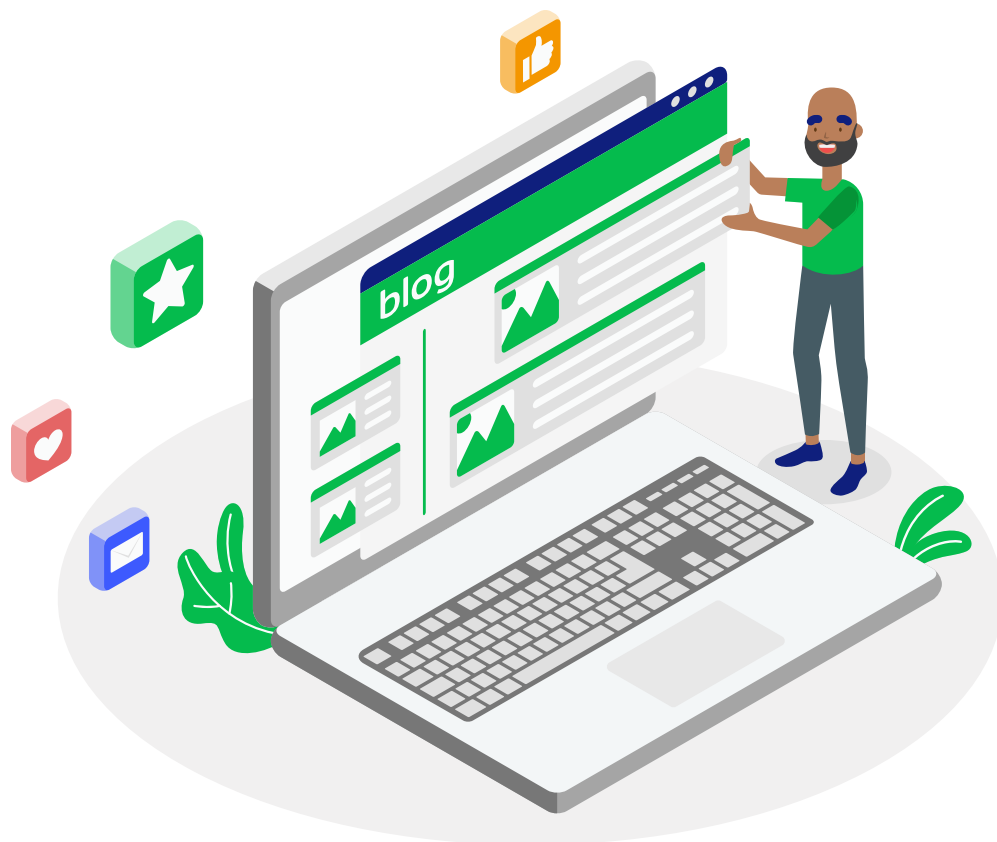
Episode one:
How to: create

Volume isn't everything, it's what you do with it

The first step toward producing incisive, original content is an incisive, original idea.

Or so you'd think.

Many apps, tools and scheisters will tell you that more content equals more visitors and more money. Usually when selling in copywriting services or seemingly reasonable SEO consultancy fees.

And this was once the case, a few years ago. A glorious, simpler time.

Alas, as is so often the case these days, life is now a lot more complicated.

There's more competition for audience attention than ever and Google is now more intelligent than most of the technology on the Death Star. It knows when you're spamming people, and it knows when you're just regurgitating the same old rubbish that your competitors were cranking out 12 years ago.

As a result, sites that churn out blog posts like it's 2009 plummet further and further down the search engine ranking pages (SERPs) every day. Simultaneously new, modern sites who publish targeted, trending content leapfrog their way up Google, Yahoo and Bing.

Publishing strategically is now more important than ever, but as a result, so is actually devising and planning your creative content output. After all, you can train a relatively intelligent chimp to produce content in volume (don't believe me? Then click this link).

Search engines recognise and reward pages that provide valuable content. There are a number of differences between valuable content and just content.

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What does valuable content look like?

Give the people what they want (up to a point)

The most common central mistake that content writers make when coming up with blog topics and titles is that they either pay too much attention to their competitors or not enough.

Too often these approaches result in a product that is either:

- **Dominated by the issues that the writer wants to talk about, rather than what your audience actually wants on that day**

- **So derivative and unoriginal that you may as well just retweet a link to your competitor's source article. It'll save you time and someone may actually get some benefit from it**

The sweet spot for devising really incisive content topics is somewhere in the middle of these two approaches.

You should always listen to your target audience. You should always give them what they want, but they won't think any more of you or your business if you don't tell you something they didn't already know.

Hence why we may be on shaky ground producing these Guides.

However, we stick our heads above the parapet because we believe it's our job to help you make your content better. Not just by using inflo.Ai tool, but with the experience we've gleaned over several combined decades of content writing experience.

We know as well as anyone that you ignore your audience at your peril, but there's also a reason why they don't write the articles themselves.

Reasons to return

Content can also provide longer tail value outside of simply Trending blogs, so long as you can provide assets which give users a reason to return to you.

For instance, if you run a dog-friendly cafe (as many people seem to these days), there are loads of possible content ideas you could run with.

Provide a branded guide to dog-friendly attractions and businesses in the surrounding area, or a coffee bean 'cheat sheet' that gives readers a rundown of flavour profiles of different varieties.

Hone in on your ideal customer profile (ICP) and play to their passion points.

If executed well, these assets provide your ICP with a reason to check back into your content on multiple occasions.

Search engines recognise this. It also provides an organic traffic boost which, in turn, increases overall visitor time on your site. If they aren't thinking about visiting your cafe by now, it's their fault, not yours.

Click HERE to learn more about how to pinpoint your ideal customer profile (ICP)

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Ok, so
what do I do?

Coming up with good content

So, with this ringing in your ears, how do you actually put this into practice?

Well, Trending topics are important. Really, really important.

If you're joining a conversation that's happening in real-time, SERPs see that and will give you the appropriate rewards (i.e. a higher aggregated search score).

However, you need to note the distinction between Trending Topics and Trending Content. It's so often tempting when you see three similar posts with titles like '6 suit styles for wedding season 2020' to produce the exact same content with a different skin and a slightly more complicated title.

We've all done it before, consciously or otherwise, and I can guarantee we all would have been better served by pausing for a minute and asking ourselves a couple of questions before clicking 'publish'.

Sticking with the wedding suit example, what does the popularity of summer style guides actually tell us? Obviously some potential customers are struggling to find the right suit for the summer, but the amount of existing content would suggest that this particular problem has been well covered.

There is, however, a long list of related topics you can spin off into that would provide extra value to a reader and target the keyword areas that they are interested in. All you have to do is dig a little deeper.

There's much more to wearing a suit than simply buying a three-piece, while a hot, sweaty summer wedding comes with its own unique challenges for the average Englishman's complection (trust me). These are the same people who are looking at those three original articles, but providing unique, related content can be the gateway into their buyer's journey.

For example, the following pieces all sit nicely within this wider conversation:
1. Matching your tie and your handkerchief
    a) Complementary prints and patterns
    b) Matching colours
    c) How to prevent clashing
2. How to stay cool and smart when it gets hot
    a) Smart, breathable fabrics to try this year
    b) How to roll sleeves smartly
    c) Sunglasses that frame your face and compliment your look
3. The best shoes to match any suit this summer
    a) Black vs. Brown: the debate settled
    b) Materials you may not have thought of
    c) All the small touches that make a budget suit look bouji

See? We've seen what everyone else is doing, taken a step back and added a bit more personality and value to it and, just like that, have three content topics and nine blog ideas.
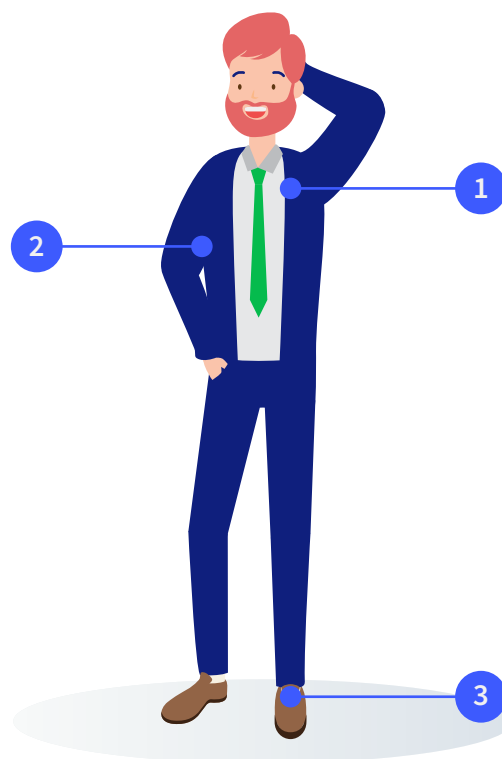
How can inflo.Ai help?

The first step

The real message here is that you should use trending articles as a jumping off point, rather than the backbone of a post/content strategy.

The inflo.Ai Trending feature helps you see which articles are trending, pick out the key trends and channel your creativity in a focused, constructive direction. All you need to do is click the 'Trending' tab at the top of your Dashboard to see which Articles are getting traction in your strategic subject areas.

You can then save these source articles into your Boards and use them as reference points while drafting your Post.

Look for the gaps in what your competitors are doing and dive through them. Add extra value and expertise to what's already out there and they'll be copying you in no time.
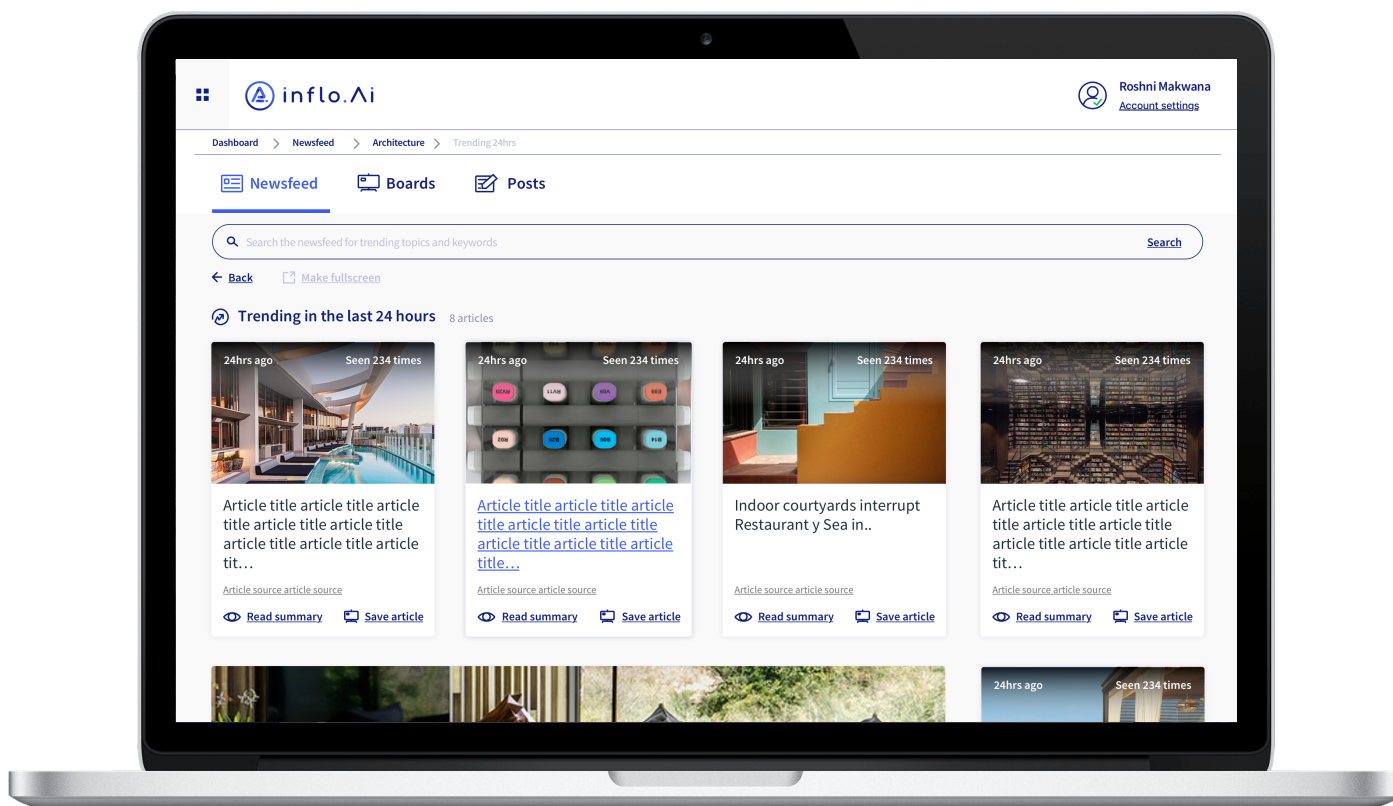
Coming up with really bad content

Let's be frank. There's a huge amount of terrible content out there.

You see it pop up in news feeds and LinkedIn posts every single day. Yet almost nobody ever sets out to write bad articles or post worthless content on social. Not without irony at least.

So knowing that thousands of these posts are going out every day, their authors blissfully unaware of their deficiencies, how can you ensure that you don't fall into these same traps?
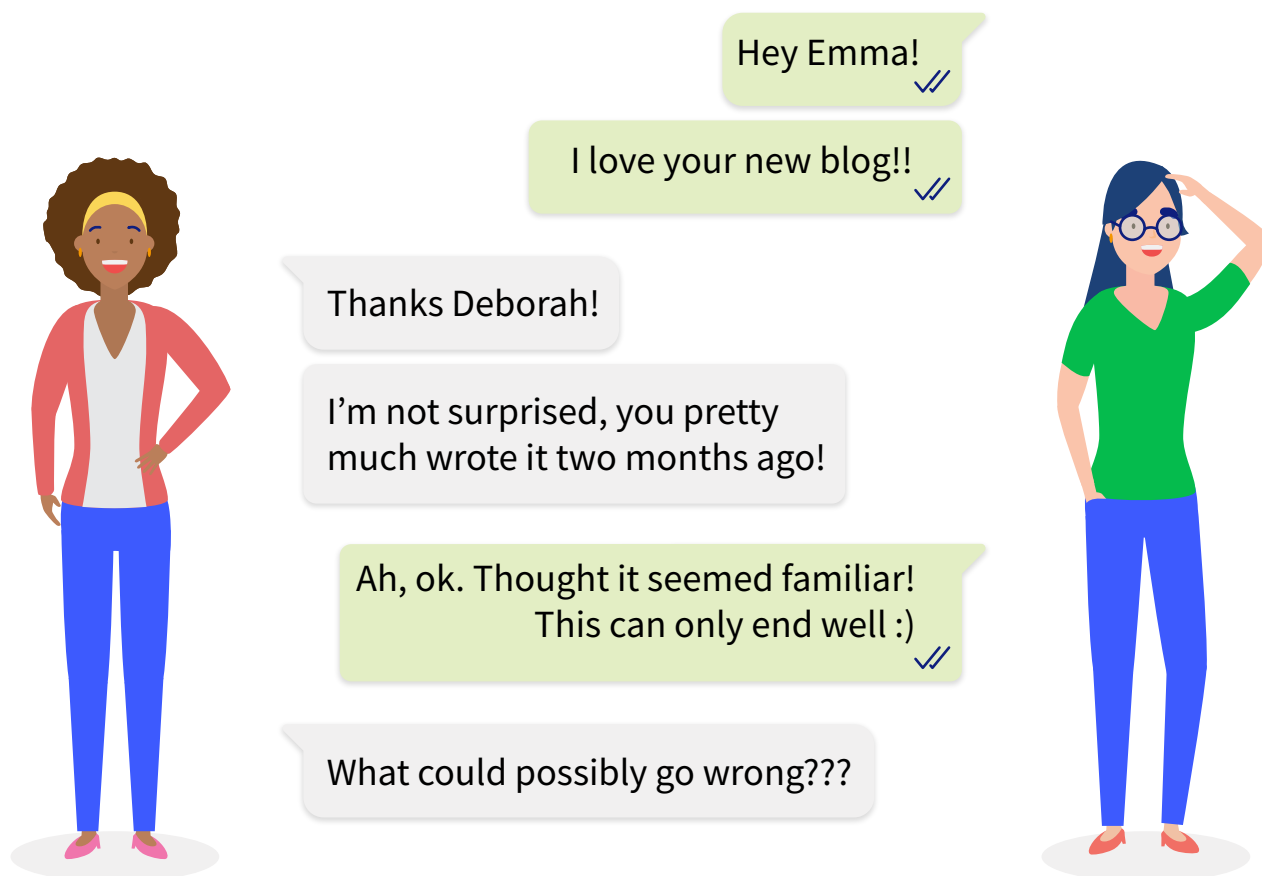
Here are our most common bad creative habits to avoid like the plague.

Plagiarise and hope for the best

'Copy, paste, publish, cross fingers, watch content fail, repeat.'

You'd be amazed how many blog sites are doing some iteration of the above without realising.

If this is your current strategy, good luck. Honestly.

Hey Emma! ✓✓

I love your new blog!! ✓✓

Thanks Deborah!

I'm not surprised, you pretty much wrote it two months ago!

Ah, ok. Thought it seemed familiar! This can only end well :) ✓✓

What could possibly go wrong???

What does valuable content look like?

Trick people

To see an example of this, do a little experiment.

Think of an upcoming sports fixture and type 'is [said fixture] on TV' into Google. Usually, the top result will be a page from a national newspaper's website (The Daily Express or The Independent, more than likely). Click on it and scroll down until you actually find where the broadcast details are.

They are never in paragraph one, despite the title of the post, and are much more likely to be found three quarters of the way down the page, after reams and reams of buildup and analysis.

This has each of the following effects:

- **The visitor has to work harder to find what they're looking for**

- **The visitor becomes angry at the publication for wasting their time**

- **The visitor will think twice about every clicking one of these links ever again**

- **The Independent's social media manager gets to report that they are generating loads of clicks and 'time on the page' is through the roof (all because the info is so well hidden)**

- **The Independent's social media manager celebrates a job well done with a £7 beer somewhere in West London**

- **The internet doesn't get any better**

- **Loads of visitors still don't know whether the England match is on ITV or Sky**

- **The circle of life continues**

These 'fake success metrics' (an idea we will explore in more detail in 'How To: Report' later this month) do nothing to help your thought leadership, user engagement or revenue generation. In fact, they harm all of them.

Just be honest with your ICPs. Make your content punchy, easy to digest and don't waste anyone's time by trying to play the system.

The sooner they can find value in what you're doing, the sooner they can enter your sales funnel.

Get careless

It's worth remembering that all of your good work in researching and devising an original topic goes out of the window if it isn't executed properly.

All it takes is for a few spelling errors or formatting mistakes to handicap your page authority in the eyes of almighty search engines.

The inflo.Ai tool features a full suite of word processing features that make sure your spelling and formatting is on point and you get the full value out of your post.

We will go into the content drafting process in much greater detail next week in **How to: write**.

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Conclusions and Takeaways

Things to bear in mind

Hopefully this first episode of How to content has given you the tools and tips you need to devise and be creative with your content calendar going forward.

But we wouldn't be practicing what we preach if we didn't give you some bonus assets to take home with you.

So, when you're coming up with blog title, ask yourself the following questions. If you can't honestly answer 'yes' to at least three of them, take a step back and revise the idea until you can.

Content creative checklist:

- ⬜ **Is this idea connected to a trending topic?**

- ⬜ **Will this content give users a reason to read it more than once?**

- ⬜ **Does it sound like it would come from me?**

- ⬜ **Do I have opinions/insights over and above what is in the source articles?**

- ☑ **Would I read it myself, were I my ICP?**

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inflo.Ai is the all-in-one blogging tool that helps people write and publish original, optimised content quickly and efficiently.

We've helped SMEs and agencies across the UK boost organic SEO traffic, reduce paid advertising spend and generate inbound leads.

Click below to find out how we can help you do the same.

Book a demo

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