How to create captivating, compelling and optimized content

We all know that “content is king.”

What many don’t understand is that for content to be king, it needs the support of its court.

To make the most out of your content strategy, it’s important for you to:

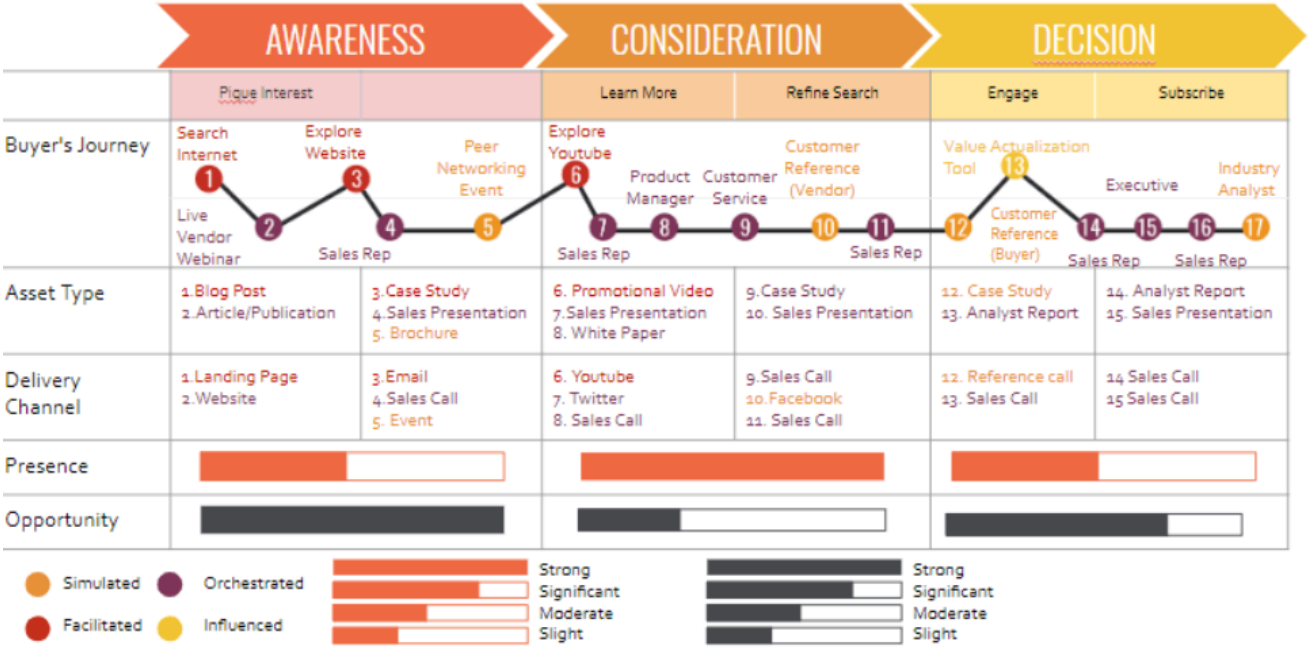
- Identify entities and topically-related keywords.
- Optimize for on-page elements.
- Build content that will stand out.

Create your editorial strategy



At this stage, you should have a comprehensive list of keywords. You should also have insights about your target audience, personas and buying cycle and what your competitors are doing.

Now it’s time to put that data to use.



AWARENESS
CONSIDERATION
DECISION
Pique Interest
Learn More
Refine Search
Engage
Subscribe
Buyer's Journey
Search Internet
Explore Website
Peer Networking Event
Live Vendor Webinar
Sales Rep
Explore Youtube
Product Manager
Customer Service
Customer Reference (Vendor)
Sales Rep
Sales Rep
Value Actualization Tool
Customer Reference (Buyer)
Executive
Industry Analyst
Sales Rep
Sales Rep
Asset Type
1.Blog Post
2.Article/Publication
3.Case Study
4.Sales Presentation
5. Brochure
6. Promotional Video
7.Sales Presentation
8. White Paper
9.Case Study
10. Sales Presentation
12. Case Study
13. Analyst Report
14. Analyst Report
15. Sales Presentation
Delivery Channel
1.Landing Page
2.Website
3.Email
4.Sales Call
5. Event
6. Youtube
7. Twitter
8. Sales Call
9.Sales Call
10.Facebook
11. Sales Call
12. Reference call
13. Sales Call
14 Sales Call
15 Sales Call
Presence
Opportunity
Simulated
Orchestrated
Facilitated
Influenced
Strong
Significant
Moderate
Slight
Strong
Significant
Moderate
Slight

In the planning stage, you'll need to determine:

- **Cadence**: How often will you publish content on your website/blog? Daily? Weekly? Monthly?
- **Resources**: How many writers do you have available? What about editors? How many words can they write every week while maintaining quality?
- **Formats:** What type of content will you be producing? Long-form articles? Infographics? Tutorials? Ebooks?

Get the daily newsletter search marketers rely on.

When developing your strategy, make sure you develop different types of content for the different ways of learning that your audience personas may exhibit. Some may learn visually, others prefer videos, yet others might enjoy looking at infographics or images.

Here’s how you should conceptualize your topic clusters or content pillars:





Style guides

Before developing content, make sure you have a style guide in place. For marketing agencies, this can be used as a library for assets: style guides, brand books, etc., provided to you by clients.

If you're creating content for your own brand, this is where you can brainstorm your own style:

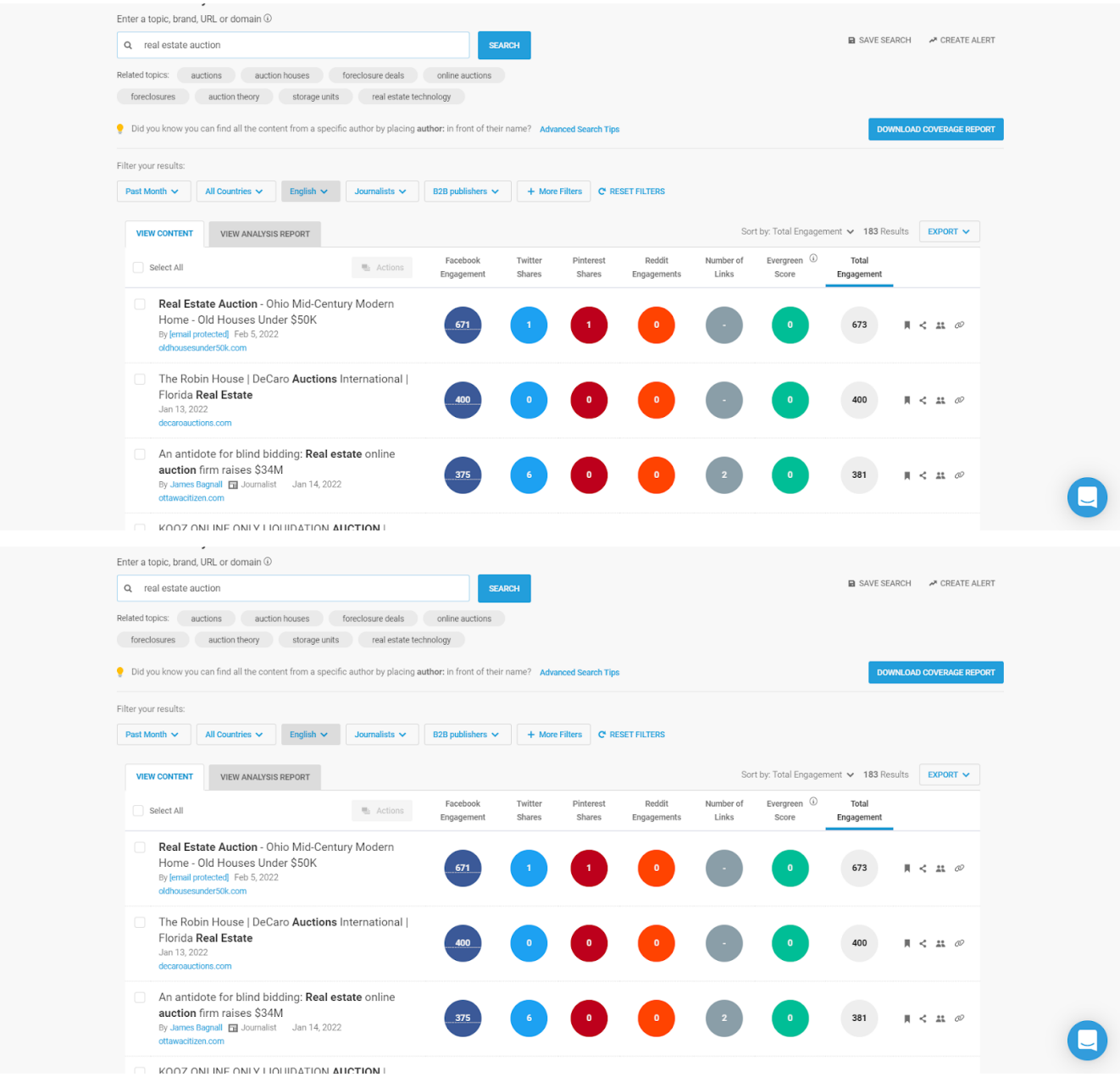
- What kind of imagery do you want to add to your content?
- What kind of voice should your authors use?
- What color palette should be used when creating visual content?
- What types of citations and references should your writers use?

Trending topics

What are some interesting trends in your industry that might appeal to your target audience? You can supplement your editorial calendar with trending topic ideas by setting up keyword alerts or an XML feed of relevant industry sites.

Tip: Watch for new patents or studies being released in your space. If you find a new patent that can significantly impact your industry, translating it into “people-speak” can help you gain news coverage.

A fantastic tool for monitoring news and staying up to date with your industry is BuzzSumo:



You can filter by keyword, site or date and see which articles resonated the most based on social shares.

Create your editorial calendar

Next, you can formulate topics and themes based on your topics, keywords and target persons. Mind mapping can help you organize your thoughts and create a strategy.

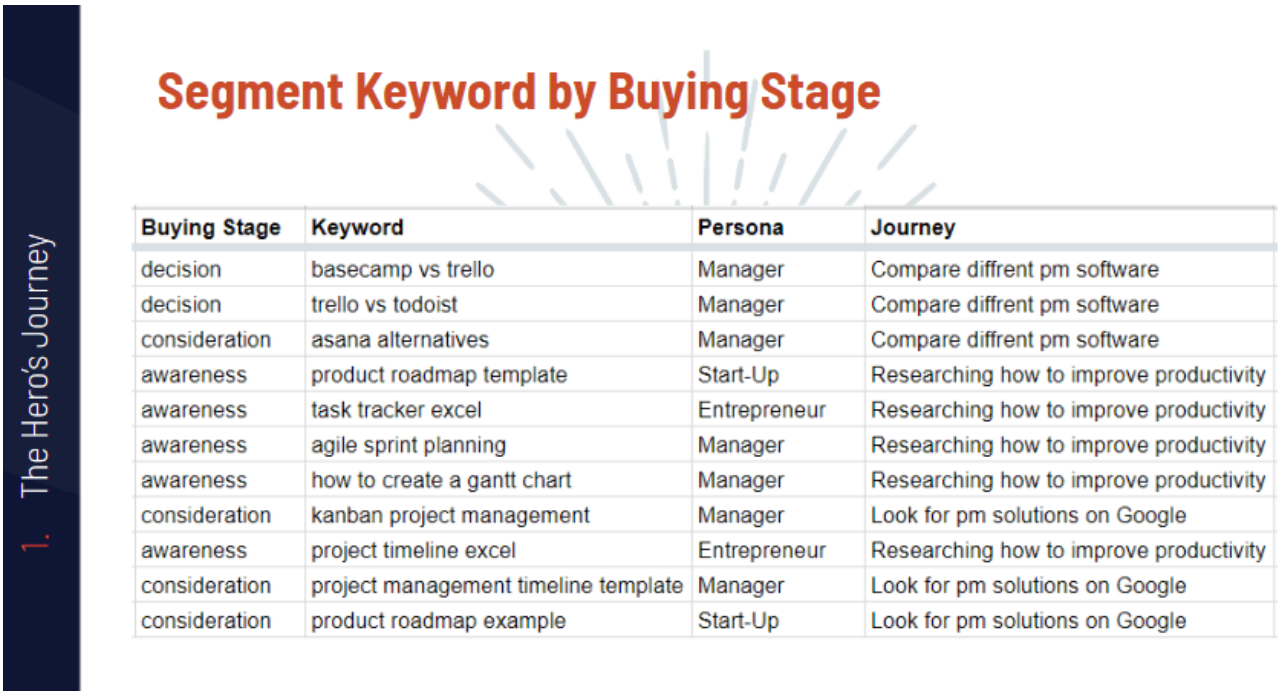


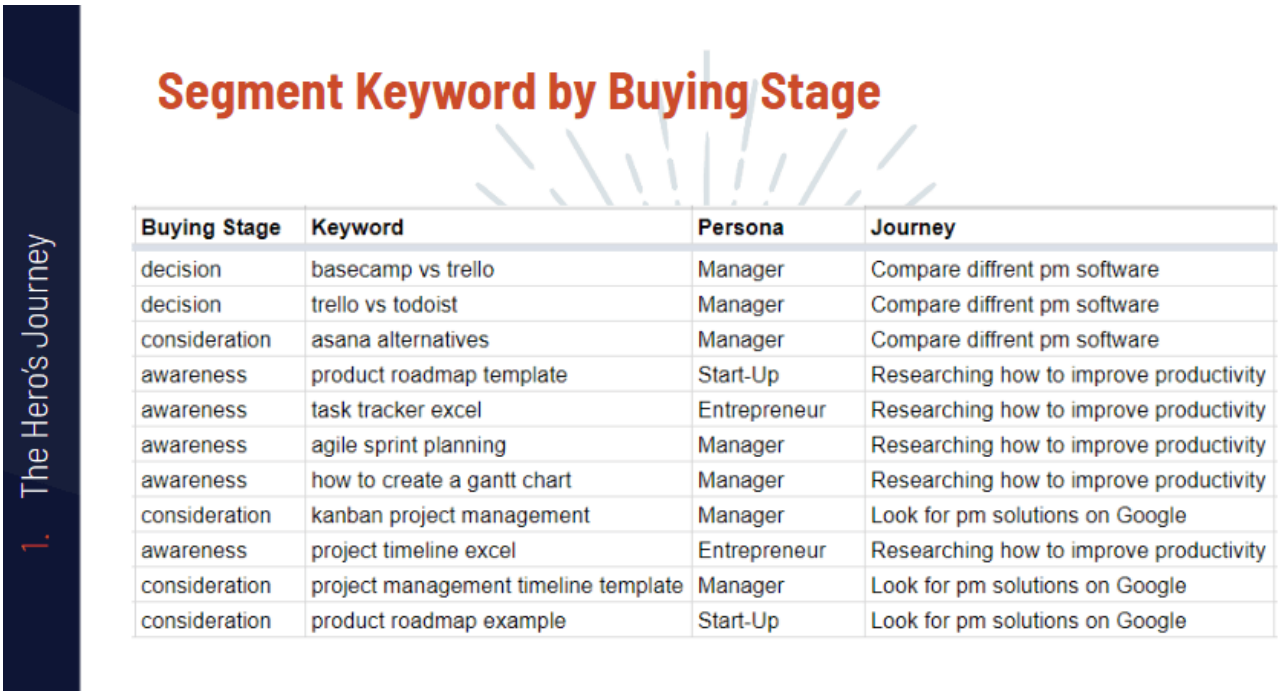


Next, map out your calendar by following these steps:

- Assign a theme, topic or seed set to each publication date.
- Segment each content piece by adding a buyer persona and buying stage.
- Select primary and secondary keywords for each content piece.

Here's what it may look like at this stage:



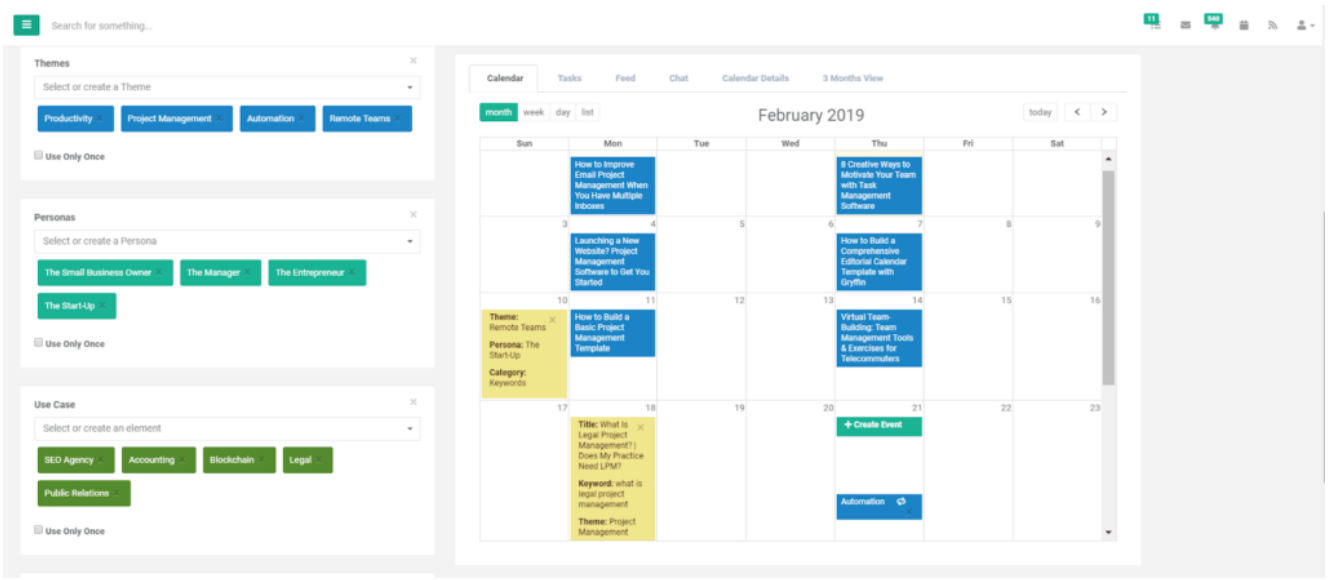


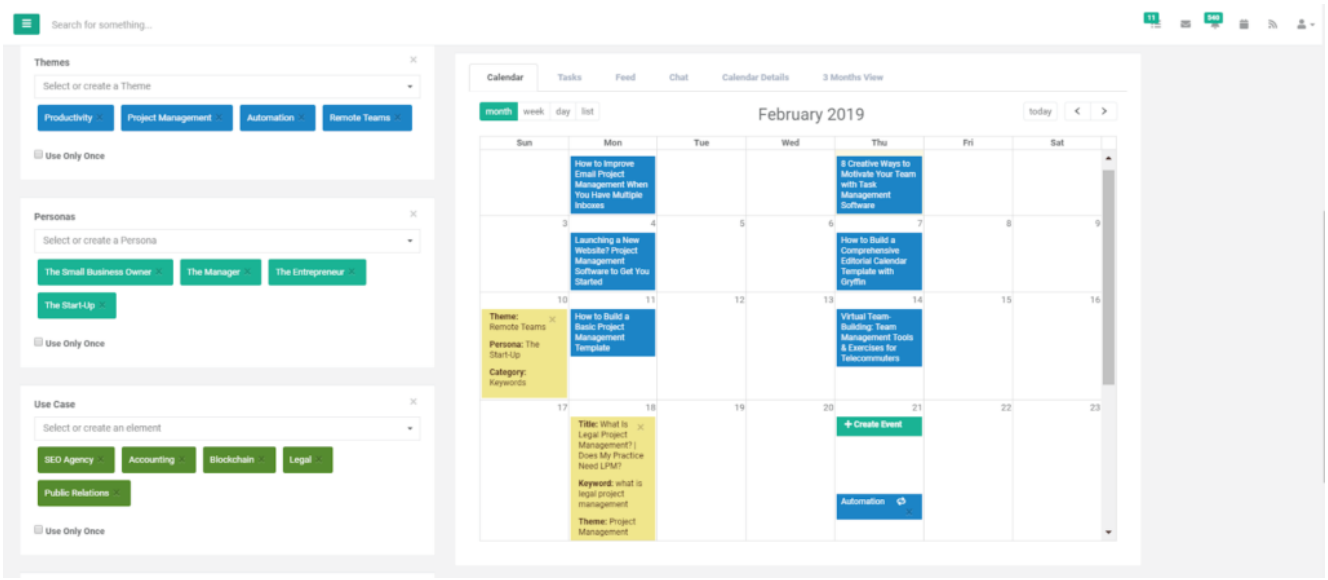
Next, you'll want to find out what channels present an opportunity and create content for each specific channel. Some

of these channels and content types include:

- Featured Snippets
- People Also Ask
- Knowledge Graph
- Videos
- Images

Here’s what your editorial calendar might look like at this stage:





Your content cadence can help you determine what elements you use and how often. If you publish daily or multiple times a day, you can address all of your opportunity gaps faster than if you’re only publishing once a week or once a month.

The idea is to be strategic in the content you publish so it focuses on keyword gaps, your most devoted personas at their most advantageous stage in the buyer's journey.

Having all the research handy can make your editorial calendar creation as simple as drag and drop!

When all of the elements are properly "framed," it's pretty easy to create appealing titles and to give your writers detailed descriptions to work with.

Manage your editorial calendar

To stay organized and strategic, you'll want to include as much data as possible for each content piece. Here are some fields you should consider tracking:

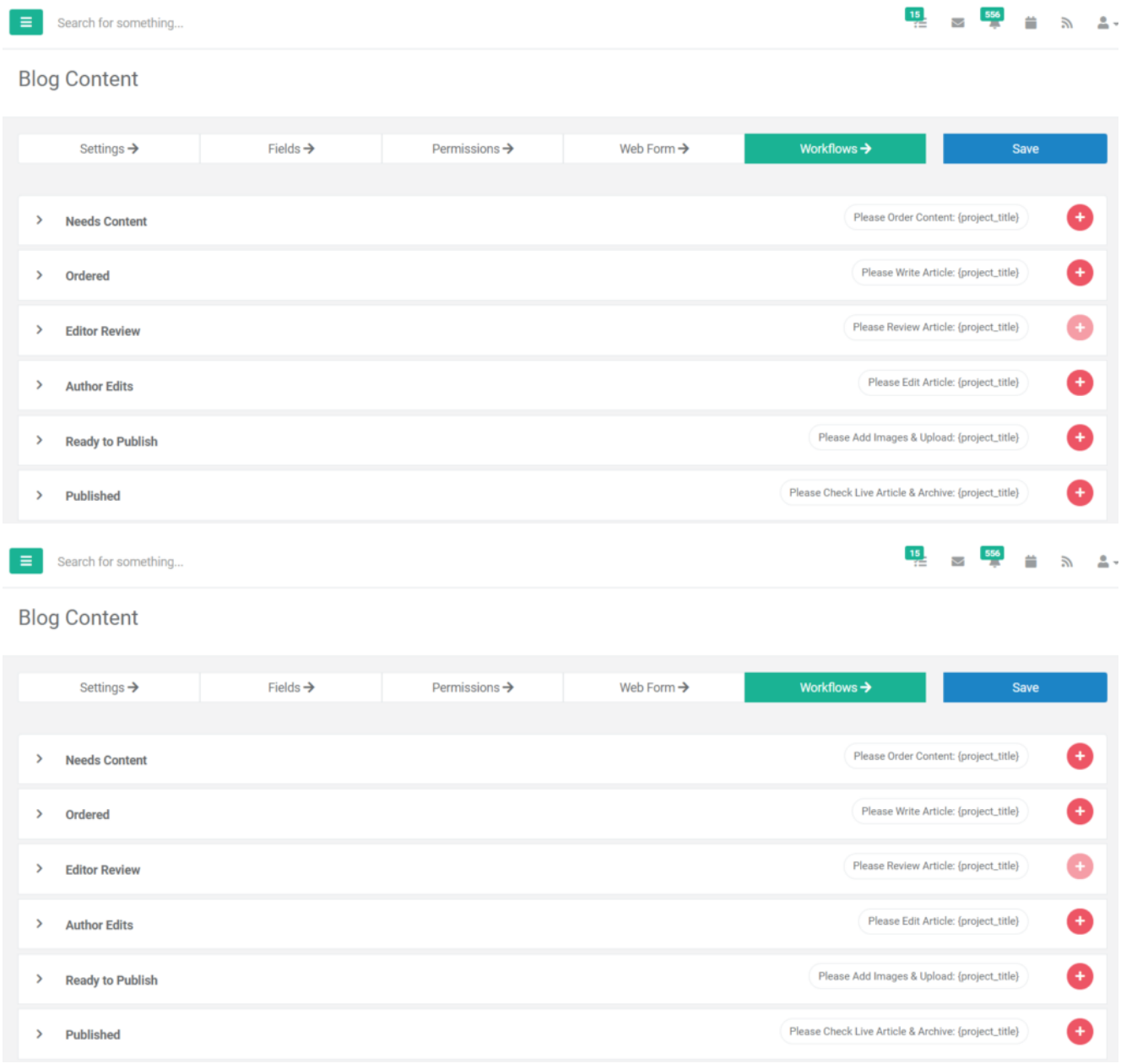
- Article title
- Author
- Editor
- Date scheduled to publish
- Campaign
- Word count
- Content type
- Target persona
- Buying stage
- Primary keyword
- Secondary keywords
- People Also Ask questions
- Article description

Once you have all of these data points in place for each content piece, let's look at your workflow.

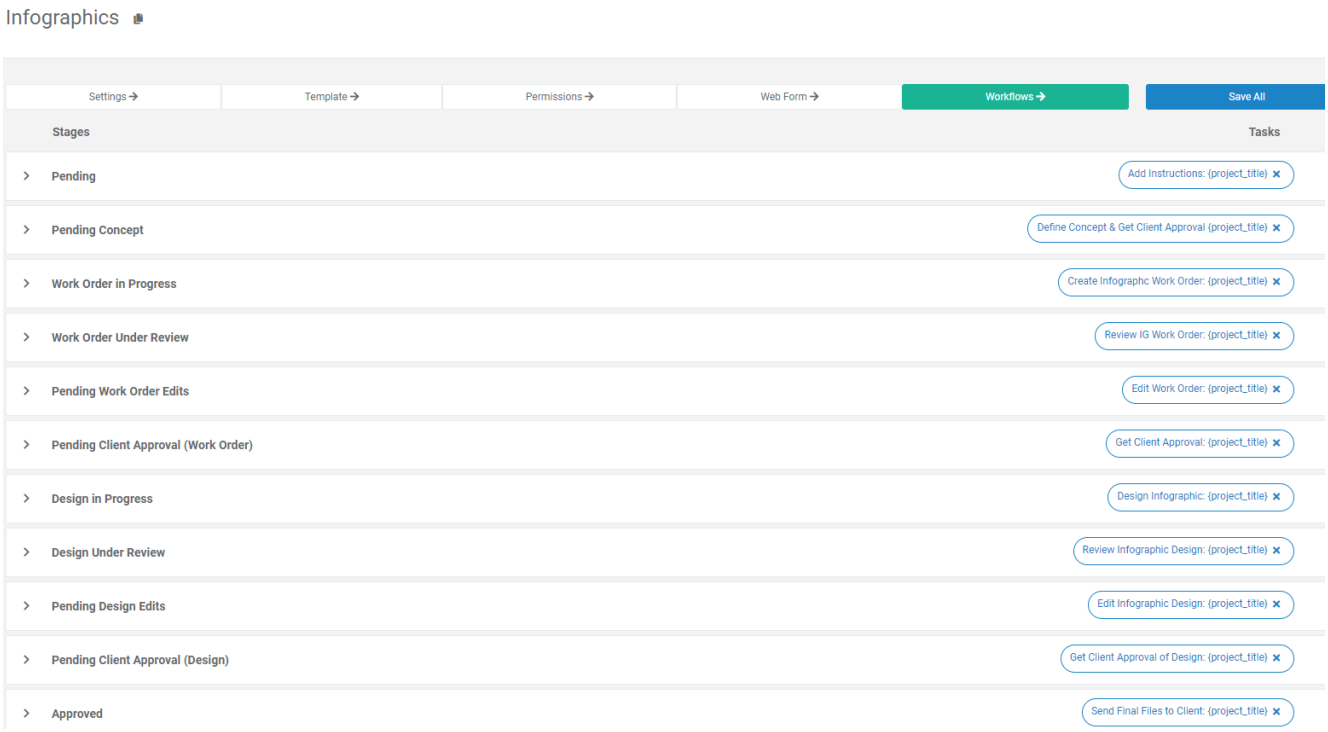
Editorial workflow

Your workflow will change based on your content type. If you are creating a long-form article that does not need to be

reviewed by a client, your workflow could look this:



If you are creating a visual asset, such as an infographic, the workflow would require more steps and might end up looking like this:



Infographics
Settings →
Template →
Permissions →
Web Form →
Workflows →
Save All
Stages
Tasks
Pending
Add Instructions: {project_title}
Pending Concept
Define Concept & Get Client Approval {project_title}
Work Order in Progress
Create Infographc Work Order: {project_title}
Work Order Under Review
Review IG Work Order: {project_title}
Pending Work Order Edits
Edit Work Order: {project_title}
Pending Client Approval (Work Order)
Get Client Approval: {project_title}
Design in Progress
Design Infographic: {project_title}
Design Under Review
Review Infographic Design: {project_title}
Pending Design Edits
Edit Infographic Design: {project_title}
Pending Client Approval (Design)
Get Client Approval of Design: {project_title}
Approved
Send Final Files to Client: {project_title}

As you go through the editorial process, ensure that you check the content for Readability level, use of keyword variants, topical entities and proper formatting such as header tags.

Content length

How long should your articles be? Is Google truly rewarding long-form articles? How can you determine how long each article should be?

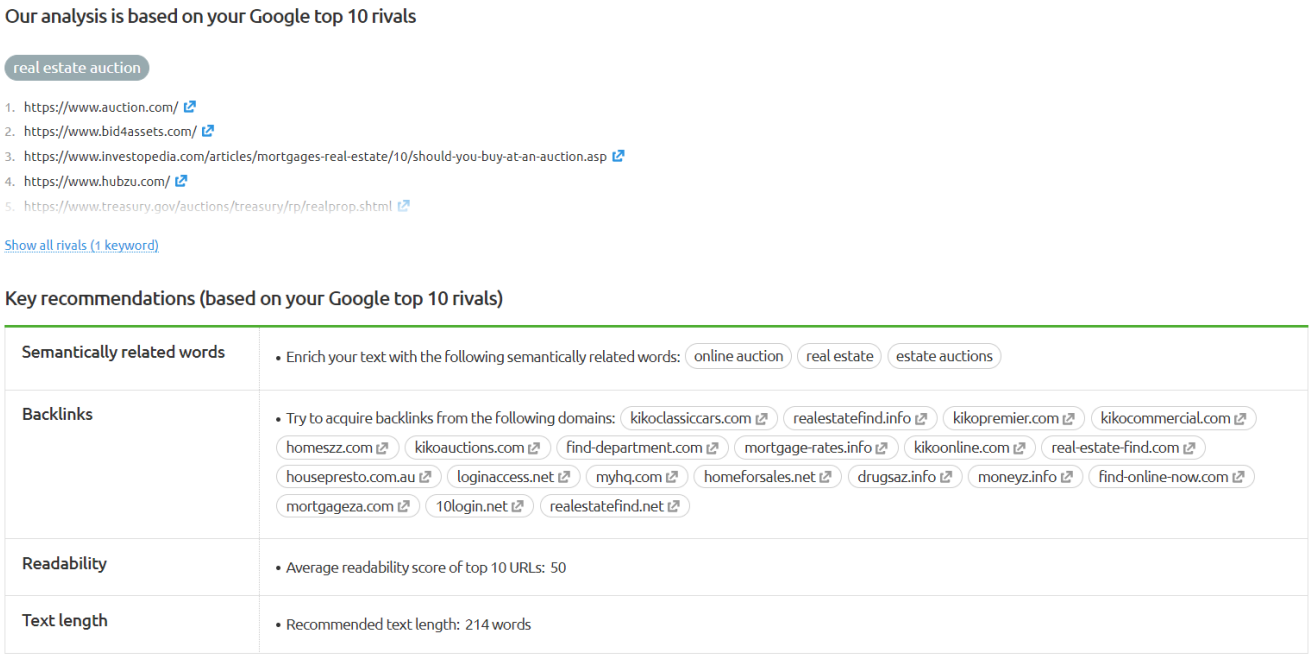
When planning content length, it's important to use a tool such as SurferSEO or Semrush's SEO Writing Assistant so you can map content length to the target query.

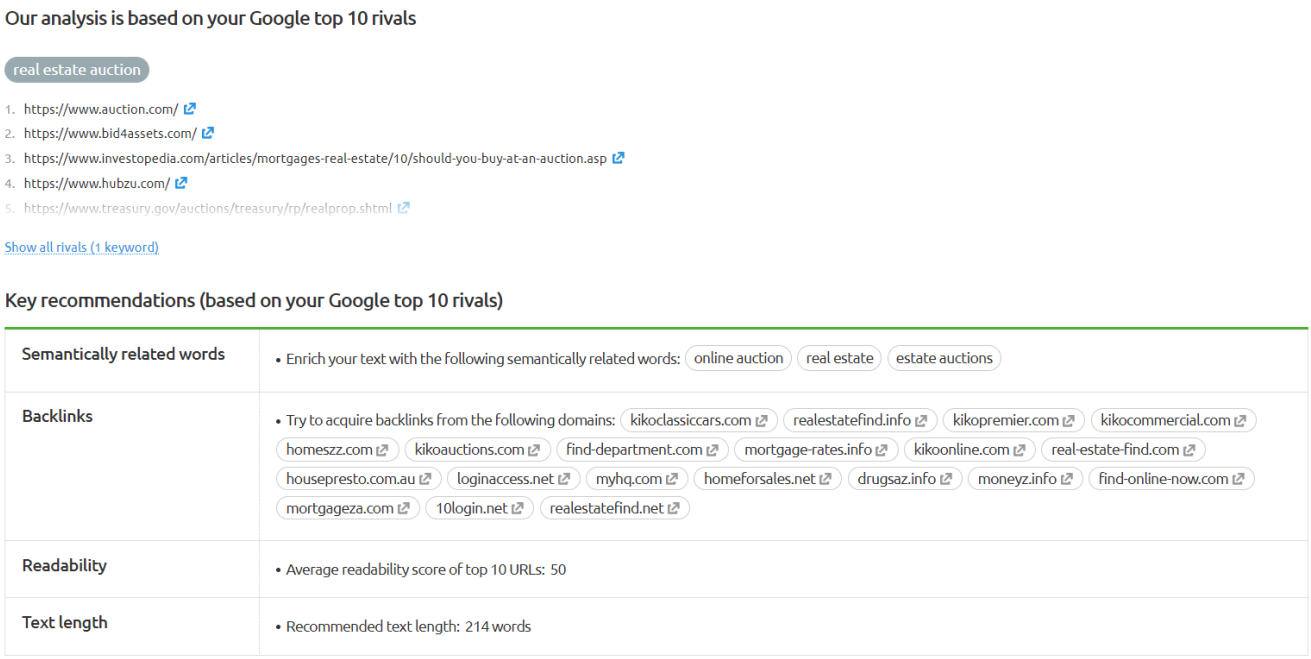
If someone searches Google for the question, "How tall is the Eiffel tower?" they probably don't want to read a 5,000-word essay about the history of the Eiffel tower. They know exactly what they are looking for and want a quick, direct answer.

However, if your article is about "how real estate agents can get into the commercial auction field," the person researching is more likely to want a detailed, comprehensive article and will be willing to read an ebook or a 3,000-word long-form article.

If you already use Semrush, the SEO Content Template or SEO Writing Assistant will allow you to search for a keyword and get an idea of what's working in the SERPs for that particular query set, such as:

- Semantically Related Words
- Backlinks
- Readability Score
- Text Length





It's ideal to use this data in the instructions given to your writing team for each content piece.

Beware the ides of duplicate content

Before finalizing and publishing your content pieces, make sure there is no duplicate content used by your authors.

It's human nature to give others the benefit of the doubt, but it's important to make sure that the content you're publishing is not duplicated elsewhere on your site or the web.

Two great tools to check for duplicate content are:

- **Copyscape:** You can add a content block to Copyscape and it will show you other places on the web where your content is duplicated.
- **SiteLiner:** Siteliner will provide you with a detailed report based on duplicate content percentages and many more data points.

Sometimes, other sites scrape and publish your content on their sites after you publish. By running duplicate content checkers, you can identify those situations and request them to remove your content.

Adding internal and external links

Make sure all of your content pieces have links to other relevant pages of your own site within the body of the content. Internal, contextual links can help increase the topical relevance of your pages. Simultaneously, add links to authoritative external sources when it makes sense.

Publish your content pieces

Once your content pieces have gone through all the workflow steps and are approved, it’s finally time to get them live on your site!

When you upload to your CMS, verify that your content has all the proper tags in place and that you include the target keywords in your:

- Meta title
- Meta description
- URL
- Breadcrumbs
- H1 tag (primary keyword)
- H2/H3 tags (secondary keywords)
- …etc



Also, make sure you assign your article to the most relevant category, which will help Google understand your site's hierarchy.

Track your content pieces

Once you've published your content, create a reminder to check its performance after 30, 60 and 90 days.

This way, you can quickly identify pages that are not gaining traction and can work on adjusting the keywords or on-page SEO.

You can look at the metrics in Google Analytics and Google Search Console and change the date ranges to figure out how your articles perform.

Here are some of the elements you can review and track:

- **No traction:** The article doesn't have any traffic and needs to be optimized.
- **Trending up/down:** If the article is trending up, you can enhance and extend it to target more keywords. If the article was doing well but started dropping, optimize for the keywords dropping and add more inbound links.
- **Low CTR:** These are articles ranking well and have good impressions but have low CTR, which means people aren't clicking on your link from the Google results page. If you update the title and/or description, it might help to improve the CTR and increase clicks.

Promote your content pieces

Many marketers believe that publishing an article is the end of the content creation cycle. In reality, the end of content creation is just the beginning of the content promotion stage.

Here are a few ideas for ways to promote your article after you hit publish:

- **Amplify with Facebook Ads:** Boost your post to reach a wider audience and increase the chances of it being shared and linked to.
- **Share in Facebook and LinkedIn industry groups:** Join industry groups and, sporadically, share your articles. Make sure you engage with others, share thought leadership, and comment on other people's content.

- **Email marketing and networking:** Build your email list and send out a newsletter sharing your latest blog posts. You can also email people directly by building a list based on relevant keywords.
- **Answer questions on Quora or forums:** Search quora for content related to your target keyword and, where possible, link to the relevant blog post. Make sure your answers are detailed, comprehensive, and valuable.

Ideally, you should only **create** as many content pieces as you can **promote**.

As Google's database becomes increasingly crowded, Google will continue to emphasize **quality content,** and getting your content promoted is key to standing out.

The days of spaghetti marketing are over

You can't just throw a bunch of content at Google and hope a few stick. Instead, focus on being strategic and producing truly helpful, unique content differentiating you from your competitors.

The content creation journey is the glue that makes SEO stick. If your approach is strategic and focused on quality, the next stage, outreach, will happen naturally.

Opinions expressed in this article are those of the guest author and not necessarily Search Engine Land. Staff authors are listed here.

New on Search Engine Land

About The Author





Marcela De Vivo is an industry veteran with more than 20 years of digital marketing experience, Marcela travels the world speaking about SEO, data-driven marketing strategies, and workflow automation and optimization. Marcela owns a digital marketing agency called Gryffin based in California.
https://searchengineland.com/create-captivating-compelling-optimized-content-385534