

A group of business professionals in a meeting. A woman in a grey blazer is pointing at a tablet held by another person. The tablet displays a data visualization with a large circle and some text. Other people are holding coffee cups and looking at the tablet. The background is a bright, modern office space with large windows.

# Modern Reporting Tools

Online Tips & Tools

# How Do You Report a Story Effectively?



The same way you always did.



Traditional reporting techniques remain the core.



Source building



Open records laws (many impactful stories are built on open records requests) → #1 tip. Use these laws.



Pounding the pavement/original reporting/interviews → Going to the scene (no substitute)



Instincts, context and institutional knowledge (great research)



Great writing



NO, NOT AI!



USE THE INTERNET TO  
SUPPLEMENT, NOT TO WRITE OR  
REPORT.



USE AI FOR THINGS LIKE  
TRANSCRIPTION, NOT FOR  
WRITING.

# Recent stories involving open records

Telling the stories of missing people of color (police files)

Examining the judicial record of a candidate for state Supreme Court (clerk of courts)

Exposing a governor's pseudonymous public email account (gov office and other agencies)

Investigating sexual harassment by staff on campus (student media/UW)

There is no substitute for traditional reporting



# My career has been a blend

- A decade at a traditional newspaper (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel)
- Close to a decade in online national media (breaking news, entertainment, sports) → More than 240 Million reads since 2016 (SEO, social, news apps)
- 20 years at UW-Milwaukee, journalism program
- Where I learned my online tools/tips
- Entrepreneurial journalism → Helped found news site with 20 million plus reads in four years

Tell my students: Learn the core reporting skills and then add on the bells & whistles. Online tools= More arrows in the quiver.

All sizzle, no steak?



# Breaking the Tools/Tips Into 2 Categories

- **1. Reporting, AI, and Mobile Journalism Tools (makes the job easier)**
- Recording devices (Rode)
- iPhone additions (lens/tripod)
- Phone call recording (TapeACall)
- Ai Transcription (OtterAi) and Microsoft 365 (Word Online Transcription)
- Video app (iMovie for iPhone)
- Video (Animoto – social video templates)
- Publication design/featured images (Canva)
- Grammarly



## 2. Trending & Audience Growth Tools (spot trending stories, grow audience)

- Google Trends
- Social media monitoring
- SEM Rush
- Rank Math
- Basic SEO knowledge (Google SERP simulator)
- Entrepreneurial Journalism (build your own site or podcast) → WordPress/Streamyard
- Newsbreak app



# 1. Reporting and Mobile Journalism Tools (makes the job easier)

- [RØDE MICROPHONE SYSTEM](#)
- \$219. Mobile, small, great range, inexpensive. Used recently at the border and for a judicial interview.



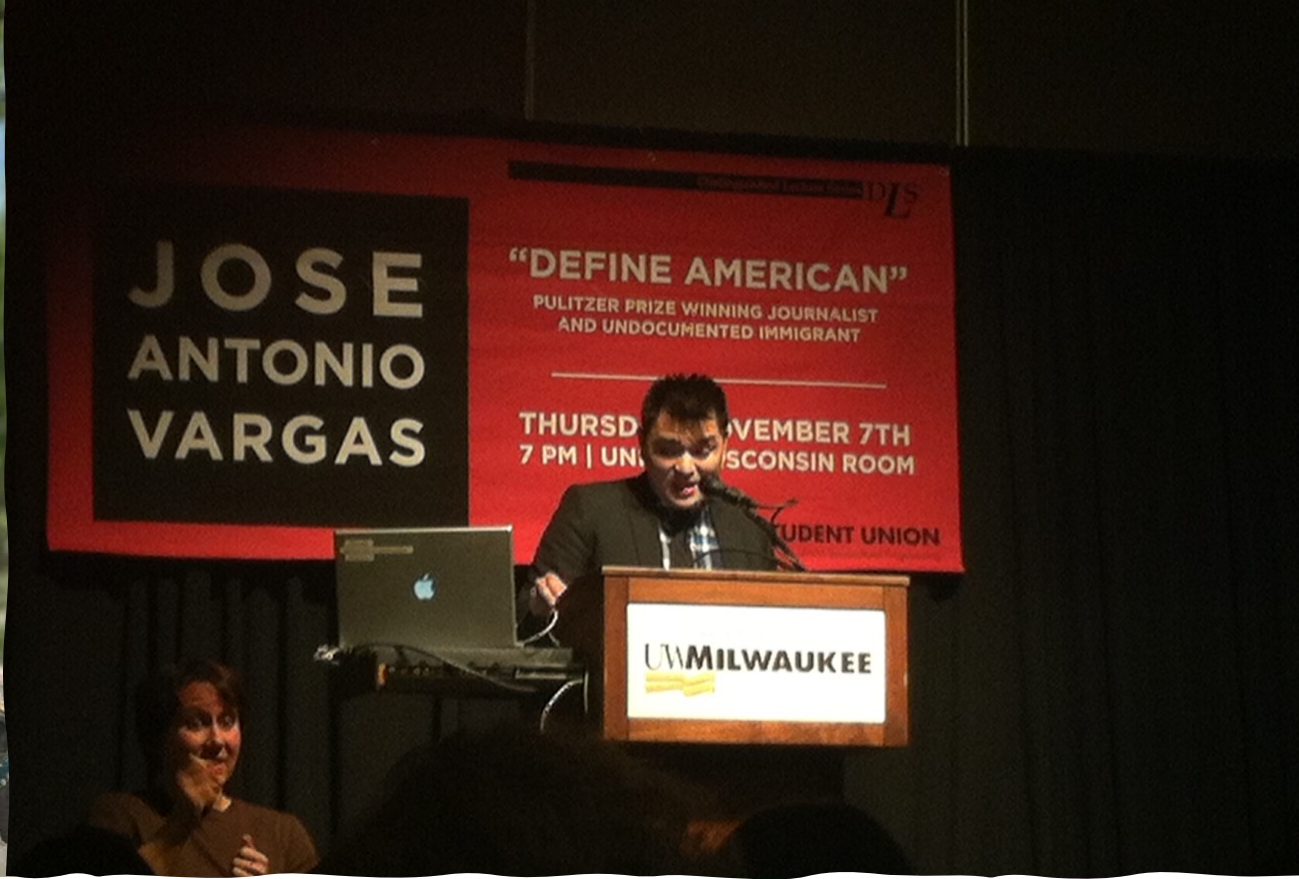
# Equip your smart phone

- [Attachable iPhone/Android lenses](#) only cost about \$39 online. [Tripods are about \\$22.](#)



Roll over image to zoom in

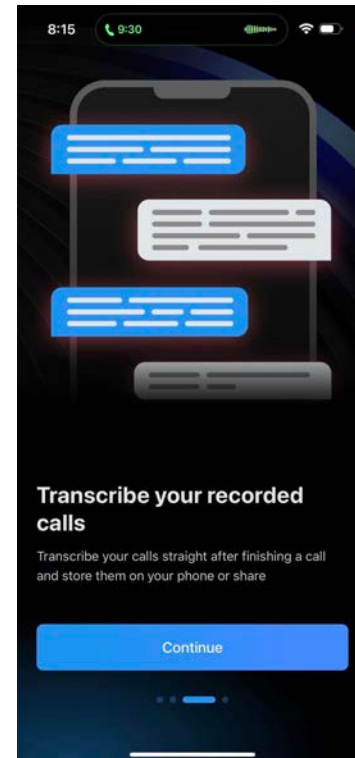
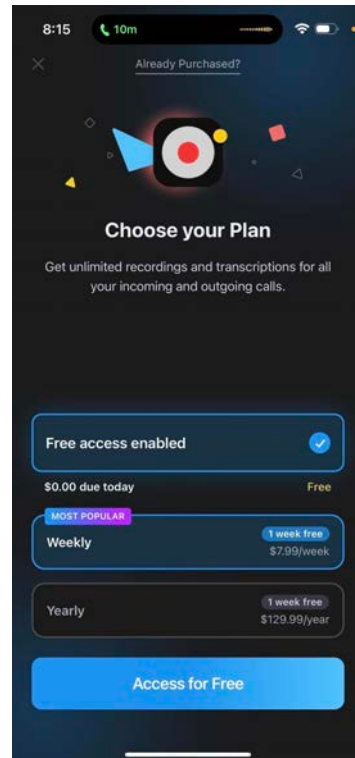




# The Difference

# Phone conversation recording apps

- Good option: **TapeACall** (but know the law/ethics) APP STORE





# Otter Transcribe Voice Notes

AI Note Taking, Memo Recorder

Editors' Choice

Otter.ai, Inc.

#50 Productivity

**Record & Transcribe Live**

Notes, Voice Memos, Lectures & Online Meetings

Record and pause buttons

Integration icons for WhatsApp, Google Meet, and Zoom

Voice memo

All Hands

Summary

Leadership provided com updates and Q2 goals at t hands. They stressed teamw innovation to boost growth a customer satisfaction.

Action Items

- Submit feedback or suggestions for improving customer experience by Friday.
- Review performance metrics shared during the meeting.

AI Chat for Quick Answers

AI Chat

What are the key action items from the review?

Gathering insights



Basic is free, Pro is \$8.33/mo Otter.ai



<https://otter.ai/features>



Transcribes audio in real time



Meeting note-taker



Organizes transcribed notes into searchable documents



Transcribes meetings



Team work

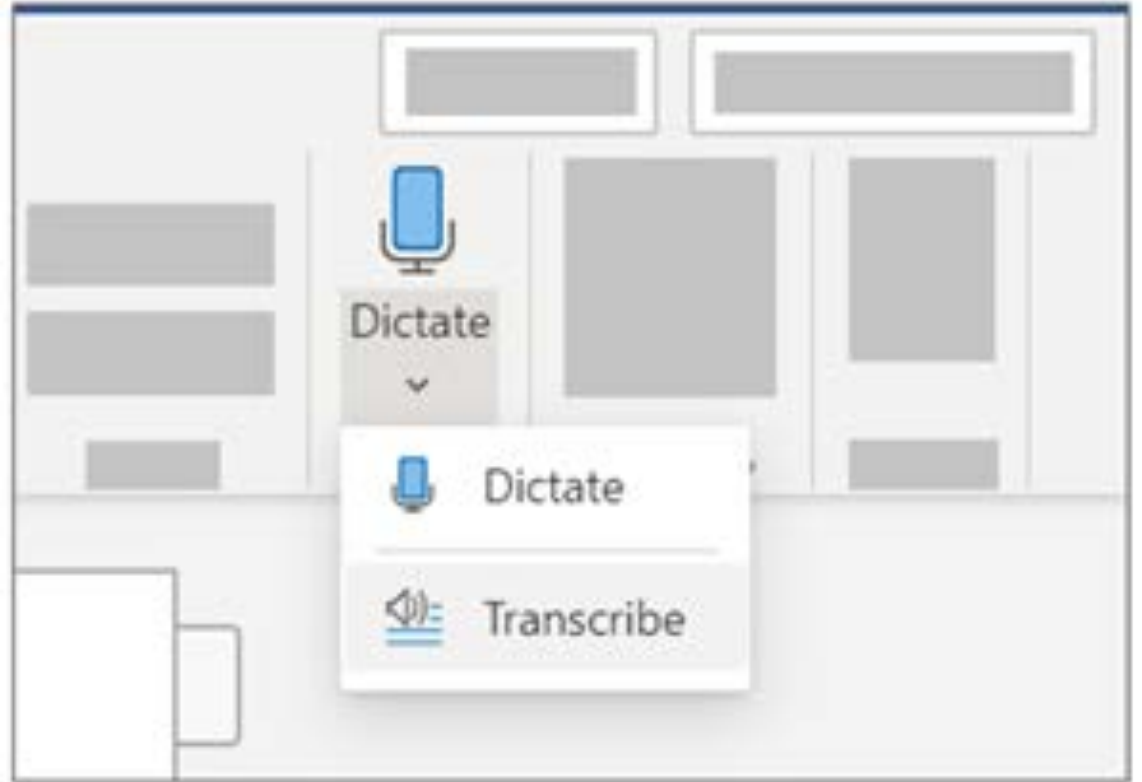


Import pre-recorded audio/video files



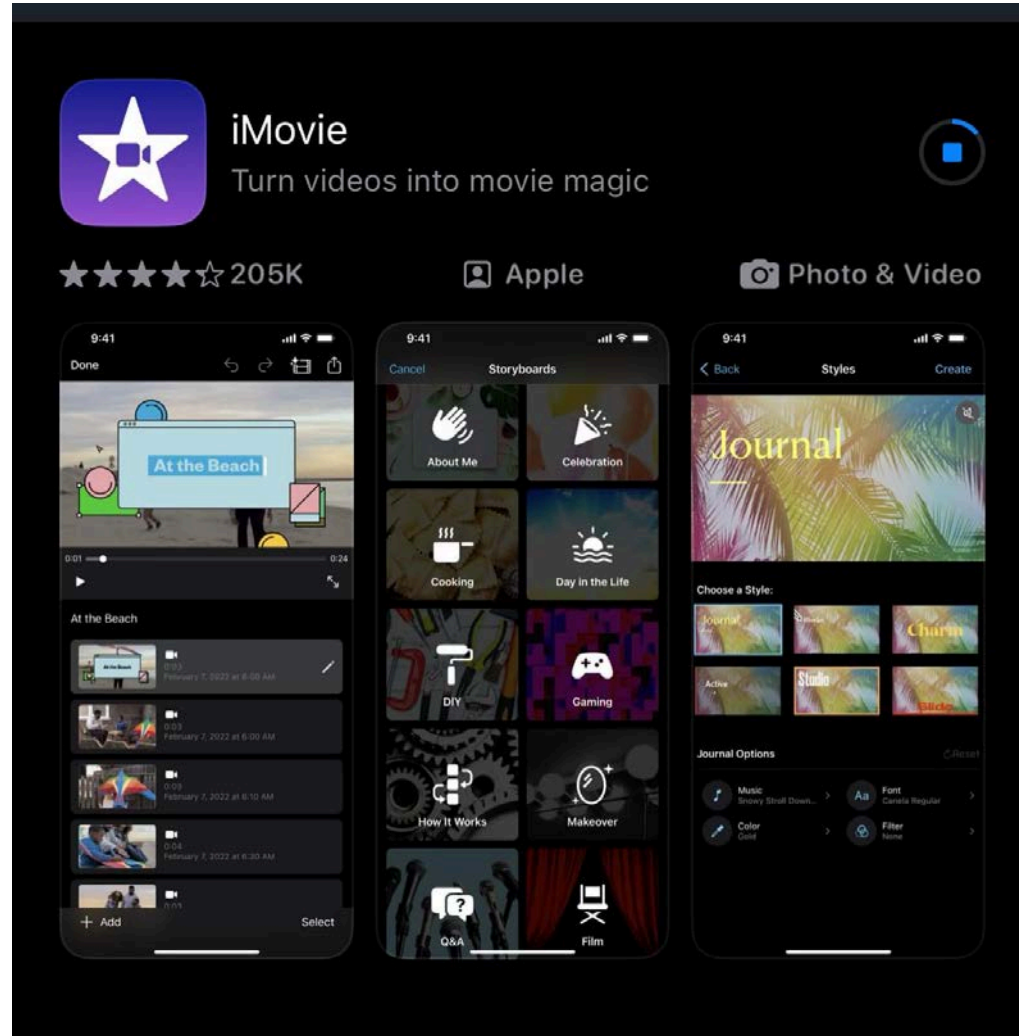
# Microsoft 365 Transcription – Word Online

- “[The transcribe feature](#) converts speech to a text transcript with each speaker individually separated. After your conversation, interview, or meeting, you can revisit parts of the recording by playing back the timestamped audio and edit the transcription to make corrections. You can save the full transcript as a Word document or insert snippets of it into existing documents.”
- Upload file or record in Microsoft Word.

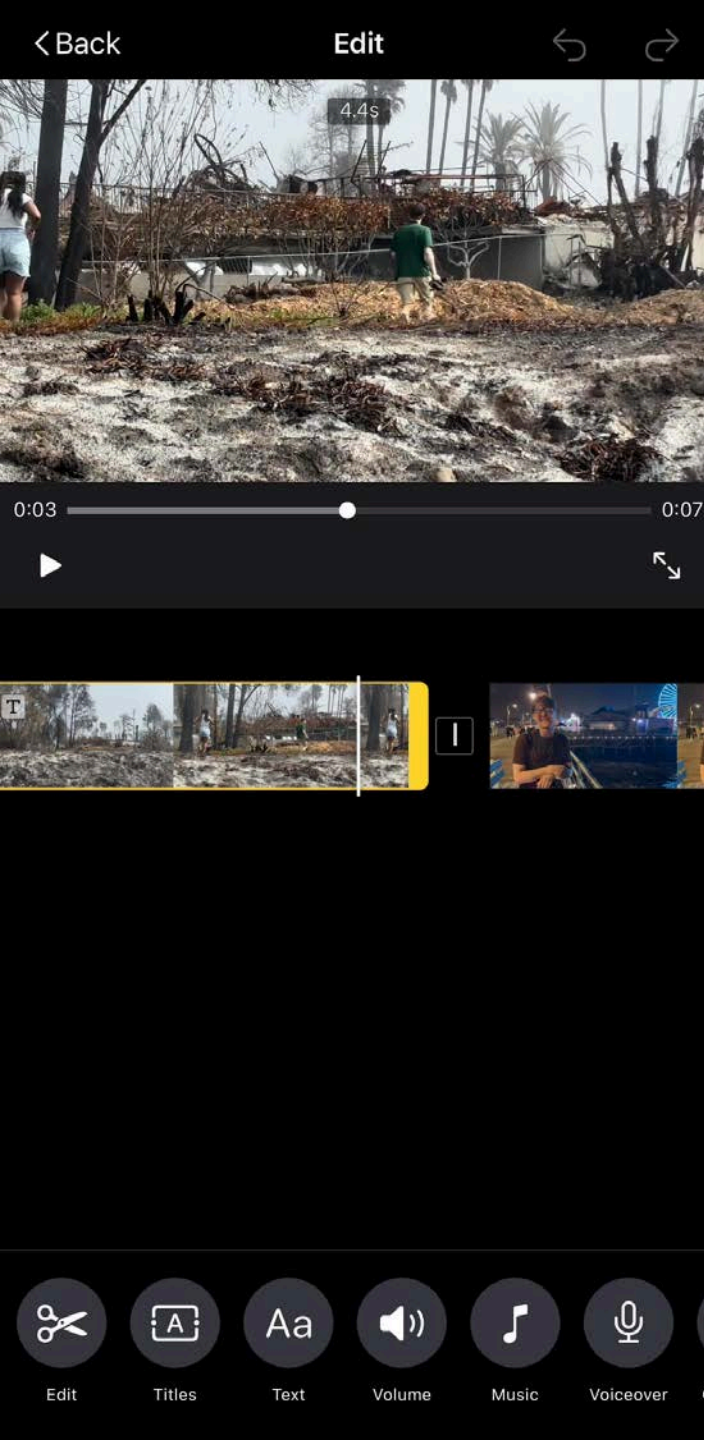


Video Apps: iMovie  
APP STORE

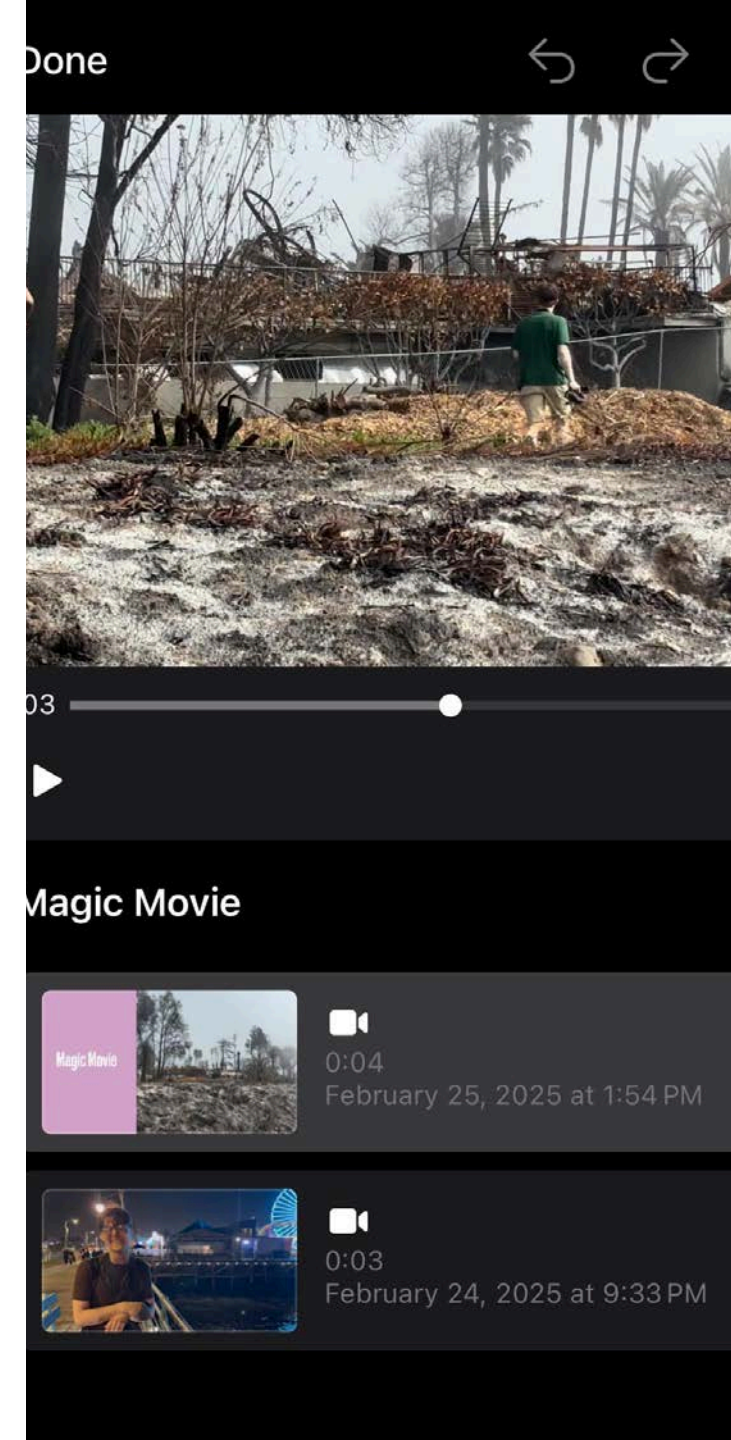
Edit basic video  
Templates







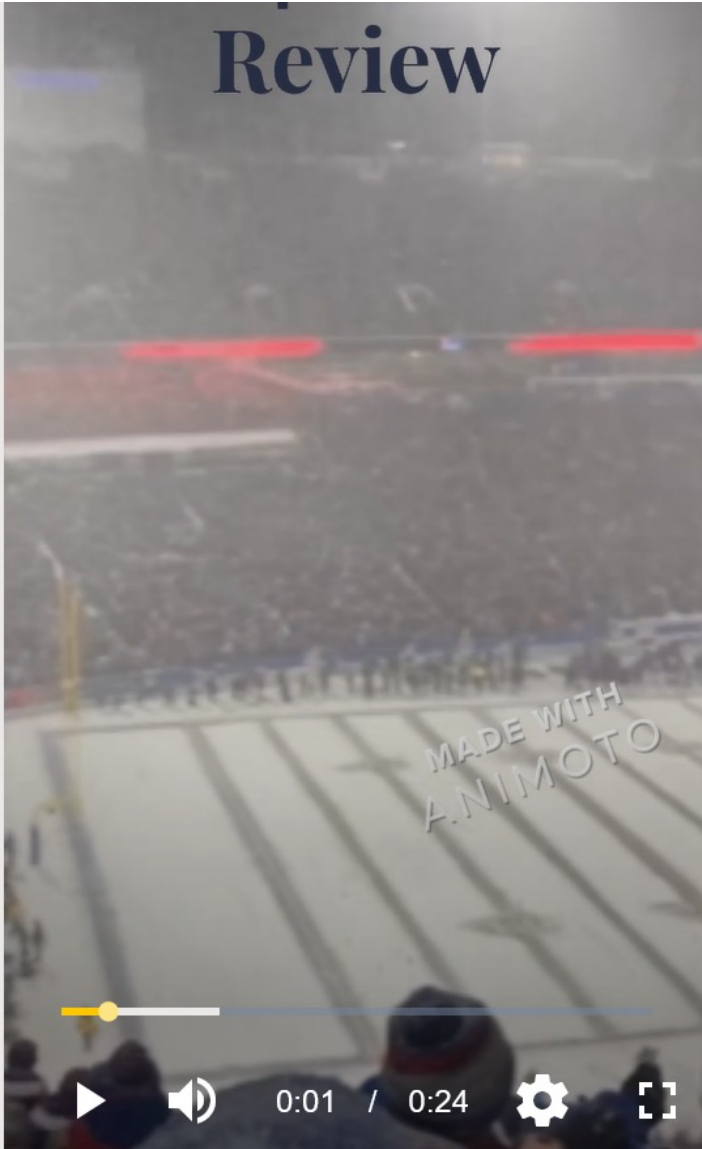
iMovie



# Review

## Video tool: Animoto

- For social video, [Animoto website](#)
- [Example](#)
- Many templates. Drag and drop from smart phone



# Animoto



Create ▾

Features ▾

Learn ▾

Templates

Business

Pricing

Log in

## Make professional videos, we'll make it easy

Drag and drop photos, screen recordings, and short clips to  
create videos that engage and impress.

[Get started free](#)

# Canva



GREAT  
PUBLICATION  
TOOL



IMPROVE  
FEATURED IMAGES



SOCIAL MEDIA  
DIMENSION  
TEMPLATES



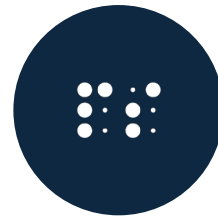
FLYERS



BUSINESS  
CARDS/RESUMES



DRAG AND DROP



FREE

**Canva**

[+ Create a design](#)

[Invite people](#)

Recent designs

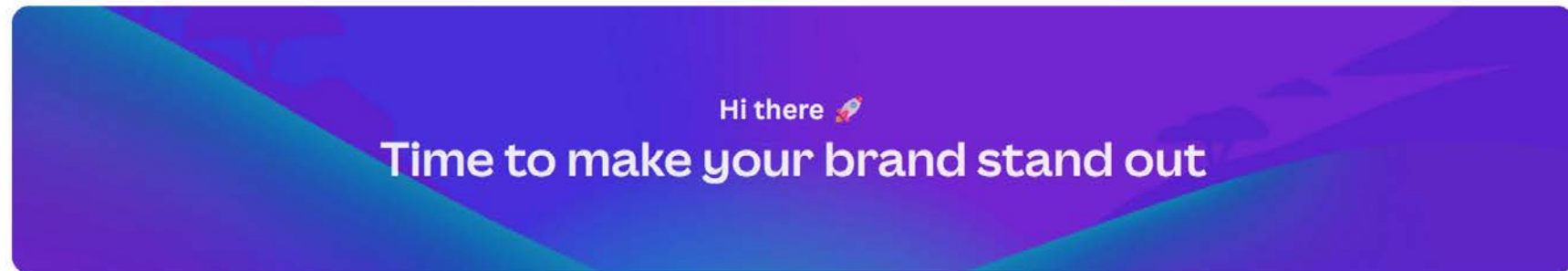
- Jessica's Entertainme...
- Add a heading
- Social day report
- JAMS 370- Social Med...
- TRUE OR FALSE
- facebook client report

[See all](#)

Home, Projects, Templates, Brand, Apps, Dream Lab

Search your content and Canva's

Settings, Notifications (1), Profile: Heavy Desk PR... jessmcbride



- Facebook Post...
- Report
- Doc
- Whiteboard
- Presentation
- Social media
- Video
- Print
- Website
- Custom size
- Upload
- More

- Erase objects
- Create an animation
- Resize any design
- Apply my brand
- Remove backgrounds

### Recent designs

- 
- View only**
- View only**  
**CLIENT REPORT**
-

# Social Media Tip: Engagements for Facebook

Algorithms change



# Social media monetization

- Facebook (original content – photos, graphics, videos)
- X (verified user engagement)

Feb 1, 2025 - Feb 28, 2025



\$457.69

Facebook Performance bonus



\$3.80

Facebook Performance bonus



\$0.02

Ad Breaks



\$7.73

Subscriptions



\$0.01

Facebook Stars




\$4.99


Subscriptions


# Grammarly

- Spelling, punctuation, grammar check
- There is an AI function


ar experience, we made a few updates to  
yout.

>  Review suggestions

 Write with generative AI

 Check for AI text & plagiarism

**Plagiarism and AI text check** APA ▾

 This text matches **Orca mothers forgo future...**

**Orca mothers forgo future offspring t...**  
<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2358581-orca-mothers-fc>

Detected Reference




Orca mothers forgo future offspring to care for their full-grown sons | New Scientist.  
<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2358581-orca-mothers-forgo-future-offspring-to-care-for-their-full-grown-sons/>

**Close**

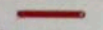


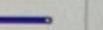

0 words ^




your experience, we made a few updates to layout.



 Review suggestions	 Write with generative AI	 Check for AI text & plagiarism
---	--	--


Review suggestions 44

 Correctness	 Clarity	 Engagement	 Delivery	 Style guide
--	---	--	--	---

 Correctness - Correct your spelling ⓘ

..., from the **frigid frigid** waters of the...

Accept Dismiss  

 Correct the sentence  
One of the most fascinating aspects of orca...

Close

0 words ^

# Trending Tools: Google Trends



FIND TRENDING TOPICS



DO COMPARATIVE  
RESEARCH ON "FOCUS  
KEYPHRASES" (SEO  
CORNERSTONE)



REGIONAL ANALYSIS



TIME ANALYSIS



FREE TOOL

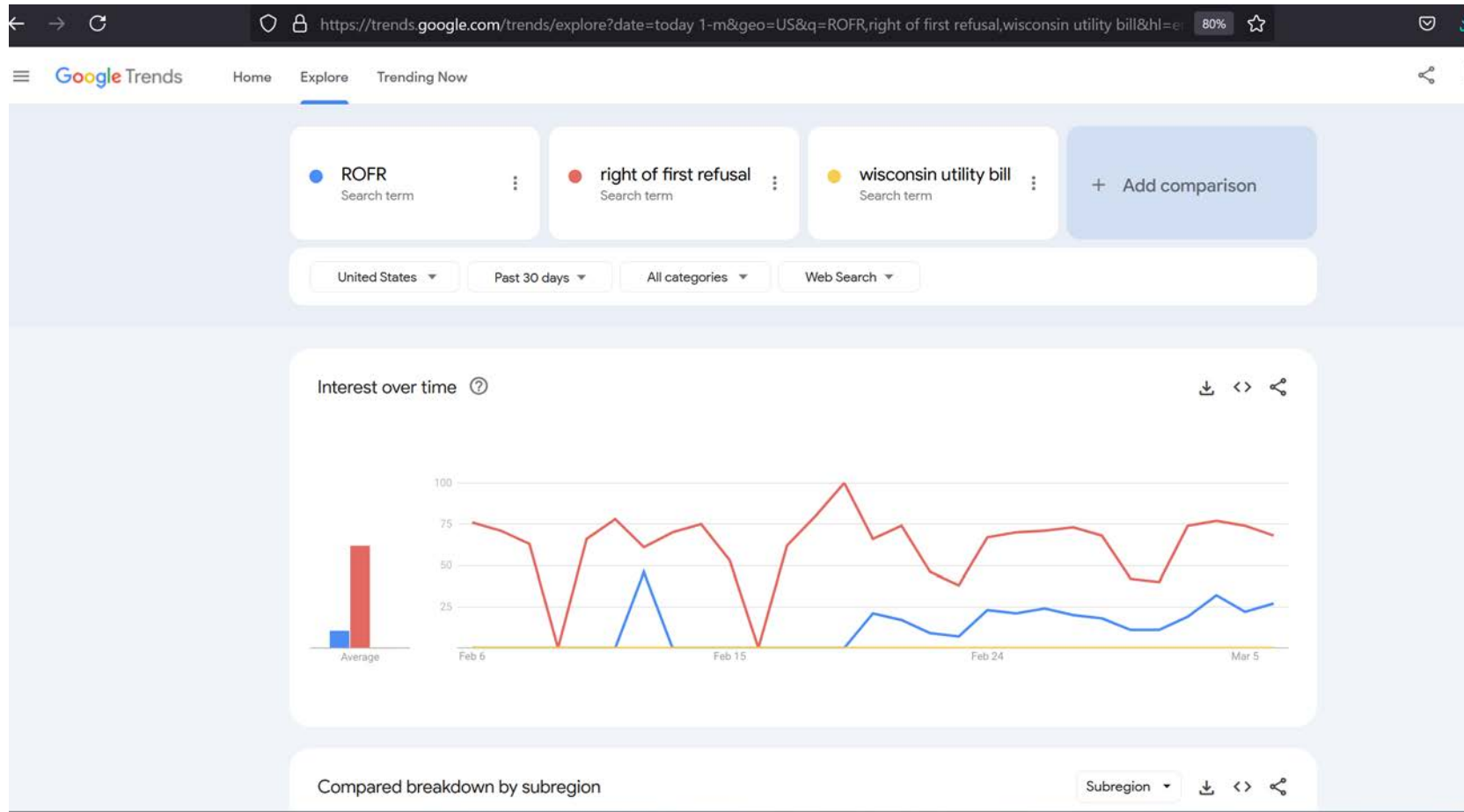


[HTTPS://TRENDS.GOOGLE  
.COM/TRENDS/](https://trends.google.com/trends/)

📍 United States 📅 Past 24 hours 🏷️ All categories 🏷️ All trends 📊 By relevance 📄 Export

🔍 Trends (Updated Mar 6, 3:08 PM)	Search volume	Started ⓘ	Trend breakdown ⓘ	Past 24 hours
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">censure meaning</a>	200K+ ↑ 1,000%	22 hours ago ↗️ Active	<a href="#">what does it mean to censure a congress...</a> <a href="#">+ 32 more</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">nintendo princess</a>	200K+ ↑ 1,000%	18 hours ago ↗️ Active	<a href="#">nintendo princess nyt</a> <a href="#">+ 11 more</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">pamela bach</a>	100K+ ↑ 1,000%	4 hours ago ↗️ Active	<a href="#">david hasselhoff</a> <a href="#">pamela bach hasselhoff</a> <a href="#">+ 6 more</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">roy ayers</a>	100K+ ↑ 1,000%	21 hours ago ↗️ Active	<a href="#">roy ayers sunshine</a> <a href="#">+ 2 more</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">real sociedad vs man united</a>	100K+ ↑ 1,000%	4 hours ago ↗️ Active	<a href="#">europa league</a> <a href="#">uefa europa league</a> <a href="#">+ 5 more</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">joey bosa</a>	100K+ ↑ 1,000%	18 hours ago ↗️ Active	<a href="#">nick bosa</a> <a href="#">joey bosa stats</a> <a href="#">khalil mack</a> <a href="#">+ 3 more</a>	

# I compared: ROFR, right of first refusal, wisconsin utility bill

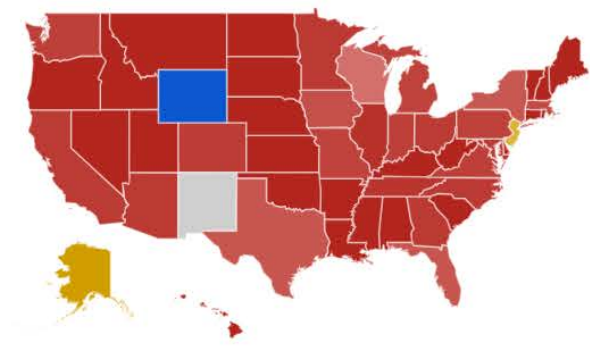


### Compared breakdown by subregion

Subregion ▾ ⬇ ⏪ ⏩ 🔗

● ROFR ● right of first refusal ● wisconsin utility bill

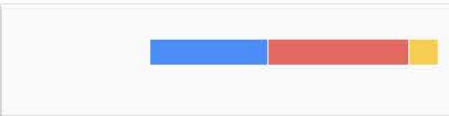
Sort: Interest for ROFR ▾



**Wisconsin**

ROFR	41%
right of first refusal	49%
wisconsin utility bill	10%

Percentages calculated out of searches for all 3 terms in Wisconsin



Color intensity represents percentage of searches [LEARN MORE](#)

< Showing 1-5 of 50 subregions >

# Best SEO practices: Keyword your online stories

- Focus keyphrase (pick 1 prevailing Google search term)
- Must have traffic but not be too saturated; capture fresh angle. Usually 2-4 words.
- SEO title (start with focus keyphrase – comes up with Google searches-→ primary driver of rank)
- Headline (news apps→top headline on site)
- Meta description (Google snippet under SEO title)
- URL (start with focus keyphrase; limit to 6 words)
- Put keyphrase in lead and subheads



Yoast

# WordPress plugin

SEO Readability Schema Social

Focus keyphrase ?

Ray Ford Author

Get related keyphrases

Search appearance ^

Determine how your post should look in the search results.


Preview as:

Mobile result  Desktop result

**Media Milwaukee**  
mediamilwaukee.com › uncategorized ...

**Ray Ford an Author and Writer Speaks on California Fires**

Feb 20, 2025 - Ray Ford, who is based in Santa Barbara interviewed with Media Milwaukee about his involvement with reporting on the California fires.



SEO title Use AI Insert variable

Ray Ford an Author and Writer Speaks on California Fires

Slug

ray-ford-a-santa-barbara-writer-and-author

Meta description Use AI Insert variable

Ray Ford, who is based in Santa Barbara interviewed with Media Milwaukee about his involvement with reporting on the California fires.

SEO analysis ^

Ray Ford Author

# Social headlines

SEO Readability Schema Social

Determine how your post should look on social media like Facebook, X, Instagram, WhatsApp, Threads, LinkedIn, Slack, and more.

Social share preview

Select image

Unlock with Yoast SEO Premium

Social image

Select image

Social title Use AI Insert variable

Social description Use AI Insert variable




# Why SEO matters

The screenshot shows a Google search for "wisconsin rofr". The search bar contains the text "wisconsin rofr" and the Google logo is visible. Below the search bar, there are navigation tabs for "All", "News", "Images", "Videos", "Shopping", "Forums", "Maps", and "More". The search results are displayed in a list format. The first result is from the Electricity Transmission Competition Coalition (etcc) with the title "Wisconsin ROFR" and a snippet: "SB 481, a Right-of-First-Refusal law – or ROFR – protects the local monopoly utilities from electricity competition leading to increased prices." The second result is from WisPolitics with the title "WI4ROFR: Statewide coalition backs right of first refusal ..." and a snippet: "Feb 13, 2025 — Adopting ROFR in Wisconsin helps protect ratepayers from getting hit with a \$1 billion bite at the same time other states shift more cost to us, ...". The third result is from afpwisconsin.com with the title "Americans for Prosperity-WI Opposes ROFR, Thanks ..." and a snippet: "22 hours ago — This legislation eliminates the competitive bidding process for certain transmission line projects and gives existing utility companies ...". The browser's address bar shows the URL "https://www.google.com/search?q=wisconsin+rofr&tsc=07ed4e611c1941a0&biw=1296&bih=609&ei=cBDKZ4V...". The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom of the screen.


→ ↻ 🔒 📍 https://www.google.com/search?q=wisconsin+rofr&tsc=07ed4e611c1941a0&biw=1296&bih=609&ei=cBDKZ4V... 1

Google wisconsin rofr X 🔊 🗨️ 🔍


All News Images Videos Shopping Forums Maps : More Tools

 Electricity Transmission Competition Coalition  
https://electricitytransmissioncompetitioncoalition.org › ...

**Wisconsin ROFR**  
SB 481, a Right-of-First-Refusal law – or ROFR – protects the local monopoly utilities from electricity competition leading to increased prices.

 WisPolitics  
https://www.wispolitics.com › Press Releases

**WI4ROFR: Statewide coalition backs right of first refusal ...**  
Feb 13, 2025 — Adopting **ROFR** in **Wisconsin** helps protect ratepayers from getting hit with a \$1 billion bite at the same time other states shift more cost to us, ...

 afpwisconsin.com  
https://afpwisconsin.com › Newsroom

**Americans for Prosperity-WI Opposes ROFR, Thanks ...**  
22 hours ago — This legislation eliminates the competitive bidding process for certain transmission line projects and gives existing utility companies ...



# Boost Your Online Visibility with Semrush

Grow your audience faster with award-winning tools for SEO, content marketing, competitor research, advertising, and more.

Try Free For 7 Days

## Total Ideas



St	Strategy Ideas	9	Sf	SERP Features Ideas	8
Ba	Backlinks Ideas	24	Se	Semantic Ideas	21
Te	Technical SEO Ideas	9	Co	Content Ideas	142
Ux	User Experience Ideas	5			

Our ideas may help you increase your organic traffic

**Over 1000%**

Current: 100k  
Potential: 280k

Priority	Page	Total Volume	Ideas
High	<a href="http://www.krispykreme.com/locate/location-search">http://www.krispykreme.com/locate/location-search</a>	2.3m	11 Ideas
Medium	<a href="http://www.krispykreme.com/">http://www.krispykreme.com/</a>	2.0m	14 Ideas
Low	<a href="http://www.krispykreme.com/locate/bowling-green">http://www.krispykreme.com/locate/bowling-green</a>	673.0k	12 Ideas

## On Page SEO Checker



<b>St</b> Strategy Ideas	64	<b>Co</b> Content Ideas	442
<b>Ba</b> Backlinks Ideas	177	<b>Sf</b> SERP Features Ideas	44
<b>Se</b> Semantic Ideas	157	<b>Te</b> Technical SEO Ideas	84

8 Ideas

5 Ideas

## Site Audit



Errors **1237** Warnings **11335**

## Position Tracking

Visibility

8.96%



Keywords

Top 3



Top 10



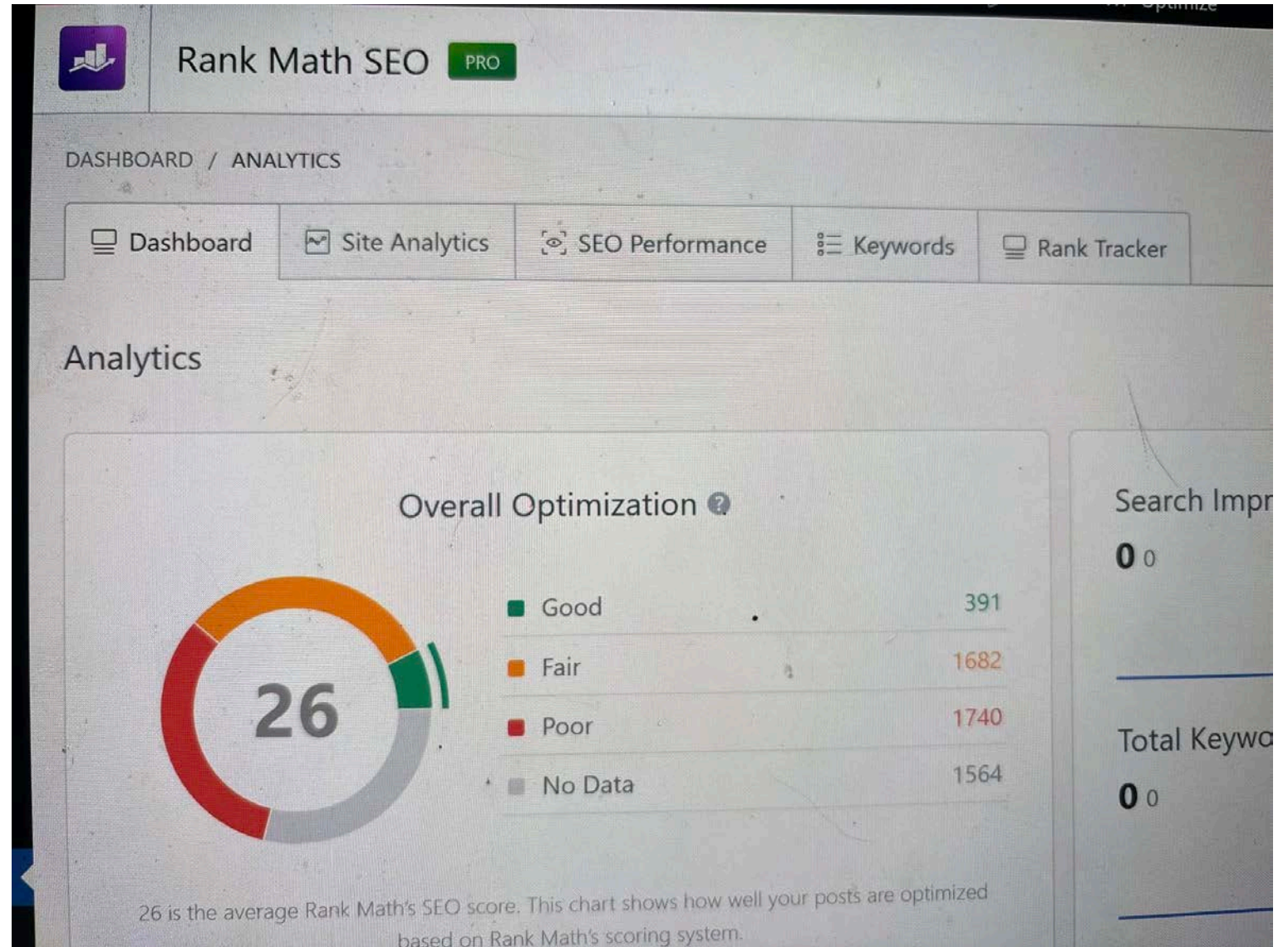
Top 20



Top 100



# SEO Analysis Rank Math Plugin



Get AI SEO for FREE. [Learn More!](#)



SEO Plugin Content AI Pricing **SALE!** Tools Help My Account **DOWNLOAD**

[Why RM?](#) [Compare](#) [Benefits](#) [Screenshots](#)

# WordPress SEO plugin for The Niche Sites

Swiss Army Knife of WordPress SEO



**BUY PRO VERSION**

🇺🇸 English



### Test the email delivery

Check if your blog can deliver emails. [Run a test.](#)



### Your company info and socials

Review your company info and socials [Review.](#)



### Create your first newsletter

Explore the composer and send it. [Go create.](#)



### Change the delivery speed

Set how many emails per hour you want to send. [Review](#)



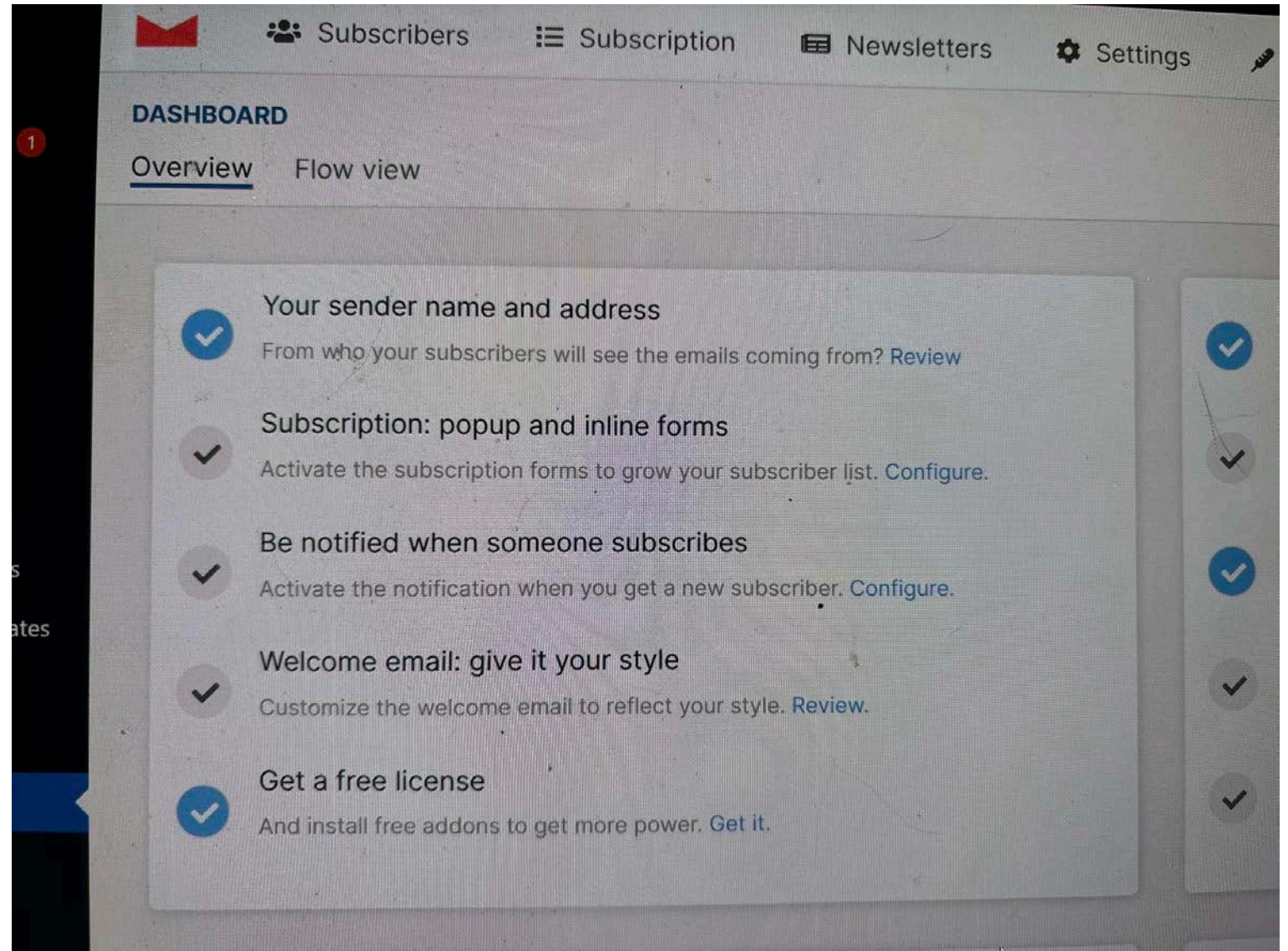
### Explore the Automated Newsletters

Everything on autopilot: set the direction and relax [Check it out.](#)

# Newsletter plugin

- <https://www.thenewsletterplugin.com/account/login>

# Newsletter Plugin (land, sea, air)



# Boost Your Online Engagement with Social Media Monitoring

Top Brands are Beating Competitors in the Market by **Dominating the Digital Landscape** with Real-Time Social Media Monitoring and Insights

## Get a Free Demo

Business Email\*

Phone number\*

# of Locations\*

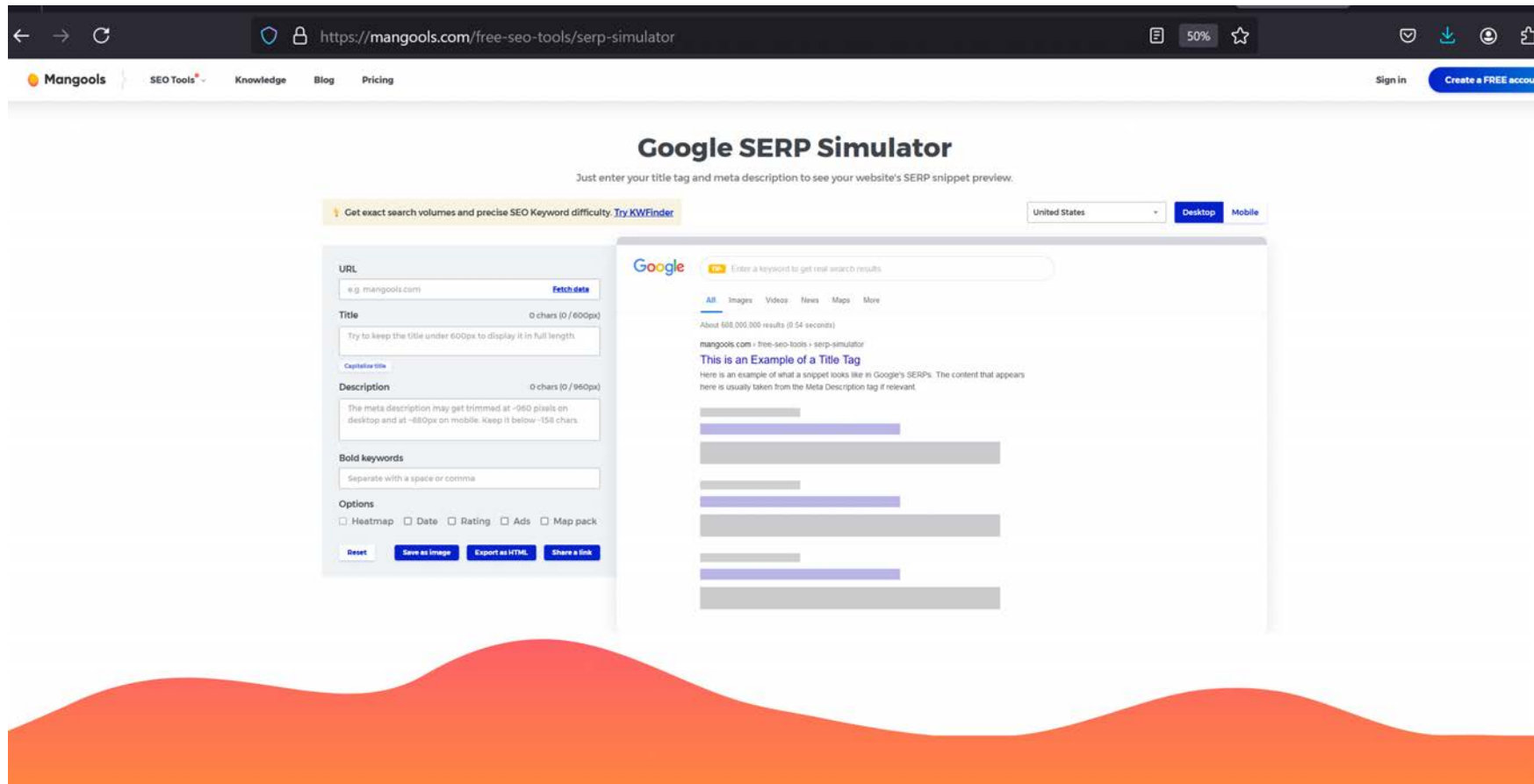
Select Country...\*

Reputation needs the contact information you provide to us to contact you about our products and services. You may unsubscribe from these communications at any time. For information on how to unsubscribe, as well as our privacy practices and commitment to protecting your privacy, please review our [Privacy Policy](#).

Submit

Social media analysis





Google SERP simulator  
<https://mangools.com/free-seo-tools/serp-simulator>

Dashboard

At a Glance

Activity

Time	Post Title
Feb 19th, 4:58 pm	Faces of UWM: The Gap-Year Student
Feb 19th, 4:42 pm	Faces of UWM: The Storyteller
Feb 19th, 4:29 pm	Faces of UWM: The Card Collector
Feb 19th, 4:16 pm	Faces of UWM: The PROWL Radio Journalist
Feb 19th, 4:10 pm	Faces of UWM: The World Traveler

Recent Comments

Pingback on [Running Rebels Assists Youth](#)

[Running Rebels Assists Youth | Running Rebels](#)

[...] "A lot of young people are looking for a place to belong," said Barnett. "That's sometimes why gangs are..."

Quick Draft

Title

Content

What's on your mind?

Save Draft

Your Recent Drafts [View all drafts](#)

- [UWM Professor Accused of Sexual Assault](#) March 9, 2019  
help us get to this point," Welden added. "Life is..."
- [Wisconsin Senate Debate Gets Fiery](#) October 12, 2018  
U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin and Republican challenger Leah Vukmir battled...
- [Bill Cosby Jury Gets It Right on Sexual Assault Verdict](#) May 29, 2018  
[caption id="attachment\_15253" align="aligncenter" width="960"] MATC

Build your own Website: WordPress



# WordPress Link

[WordPress LINK.](#)



# The easiest way to live stream and record

StreamYard is a professional live streaming and recording studio in your browser. Record your content, or stream live to Facebook, YouTube, and other platforms.

**You've been referred to StreamYard!**

You'll get a 14 day free trial. No card required.

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Or continue with email

Enter email address

**Get started - it's free!**

**Trusted by 3,000,000+ creators!**

By continuing, you accept our [User Terms of Service](#) and acknowledge receipt of our [Privacy Policy](#).

Already using StreamYard? [Log in.](#)

Show desk

## Podcasting Platform: Streamyard



# Streamyard Link

Streamyard [LINK](#)

**Choose your location**

[See all locations](#)

**Local News**

Headlines

Newsletter


Topics


Sign In

ABOUT NEWSBREAK

**Trending Story**

[View All >](#)

 Walton Goggins Bitten by Snake During 'The White Lotus' Filming

 Fanatics and Ticketmaster Partnership Announced

 Lori Vallow's First Television Interview on Dateline

LASTEST LOCAL HEADLINES

 **San Diego Post**  · [Follow](#)  
verified publisher · 326 followers



**TRENDING SEARCH**

-  Analyst: Trump Sabotages Nation
-  Parents Arrested After Child's Heart Attack
-  Boyfriend Threw Girlfriend into Traffic
-  Internet Questions Meghan's Story Abou...
-  GOP Budget May Slash Medicaid
-  Harper Makes Bold First Base Move
-  Gas Leak Hits Gene Hackman Compound
-  Bow Wow on Joie Chavis' Fire...
-  Tech CEO Thrives by Defying Zuckerberg
-  Jordan vs Bryant: Vertical Leap Secrets

[See all trends >](#)

 **OMG Facts**  
Ad

Newsbreak

- <https://www.newsbreak.com/>

# Newsbreak Tips

Location in top headline: state, city,  
county name

Strong action verb

Pull out the unique angle

Conflict news value

# Interested in getting this PPT?

- Email:
- Jessica McBride
- Journalism Faculty, UW-Milwaukee
- [mcbridej@uwm.edu](mailto:mcbridej@uwm.edu)

