

Storykit_

Script writing for social media videos

A guide to crafting scripts that
drive engagement and results

Hello. We're Storykit

The complete video creation tool that's busy changing how the world thinks about and works with video. Our thing is video for everything, video for everyone. And by everyone, we mean everyone who wants to do high volume, even higher quality video. Everyone who doesn't have the budget or time for traditional production. Everyone who has absolutely no editing skills. Everyone with a content plan. Everyone without a content plan. Everyone who's never made video in their life. That everyone.

So. Let's do it. Let's Storykit it.

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Content

Good script = good video	4
The silent feed – a new type of video	5
...and a new type of video creator	6
Focus on the script. Not on the footage.	7
Build a solid foundation for your script	8
Test your stories	9
Keep a close eye on your target audience	10
Do one thing at a time	11
Decide what you want too achieve	12
Structure your story	13
Yes, your video is a story	14
2 clever journalist tricks	15
Start big	16
First: Dare to try	17
5 hooks that'll make the audience stop scrolling	18
Using headlines in videos	20
Work with your words	21
9 tips for your script writing	22
Things to avoid	25
Or... why not let AI work with your words?	26
Want to get hands on with video?	27

Good script = good video

Most of all video views on social channels happen without sound.

This means that the script is the most important part of video creation for social channels.

It has also made way for a completely new video producer.

We're talking about you.

In this ebook we will explain why the script is the most important part of a social video and how you can craft compelling scripts that will drive the kind of engagement and results you're after.

The silent feed

– a new type of video

Almost ten years ago, Facebook chose to mute the video sound in feeds. This has created a plethora of new possibilities for a new type of video.

Facebook launched the News Feed already in 2006, which in many ways acted as the starting point for the social media we know today.

Facebook was no longer a library of profiles that could be connected, but a feed of events, news, comments, discussions, and social contacts.

Shortly after, Facebook launched its first advertising solutions, which caused a gigantic paradigm shift in how we generally view advertising.

During a conference, the founder Mark Zuckerberg described the shift thus: “For the last hundred years media has been pushed out to people, but now marketers are going to be a part of the conversation.”

However, it was not until 2013 when Facebook finally started using video advertising on the platform. In connection with the launch of video advertising,

Facebook chose to make a change that has greatly impacted how the audience consumes video; a change that still today to a very high degree affects the way we work with video:

In September 2013, a video autoplay feature was implemented – meaning that all video was to be played with sound off.



...and a new type of video creator

There's a new video professional in town. You!

What does the silent feed mean for video creators? The most obvious change that occurs when the viewer starts watching video without sound is that the video must have subtitles. Nothing crazy so far.

However, when the text suddenly becomes a crucial factor for whether your video is consumed at all, something extraordinary happens: the entire definition of what video is changes in a heartbeat and the script becomes the most important aspect of your video.

For content producers working with social media, the difference is clear: you can spend weeks making great, skilfully shot productions that still don't get traction on social channels.

And then someone creates a simple, text-focused video that gets millions of views.

— Today, every single aspect of video creation for social media is greatly inferior to the script. You can always elevate the subjective quality of your video if you choose a better picture or put a little effort into the details, but the script accounts for 90% of the effect once your video is out there, says Fredrik Strömberg, CPO at Storykit.

This paves the way for a completely new type of video creator: You.

– Suddenly, the person with the expensive camera and extensive knowledge of advanced video programs is no longer the main talent when it comes to successful video creation. Instead, the best video creator is the person who can tell a great story, says Fredrik Strömberg.

Focus on the script. Not on the footage.

Making impactful videos without focusing on the footage, that's what we mean when we talk about the "script".

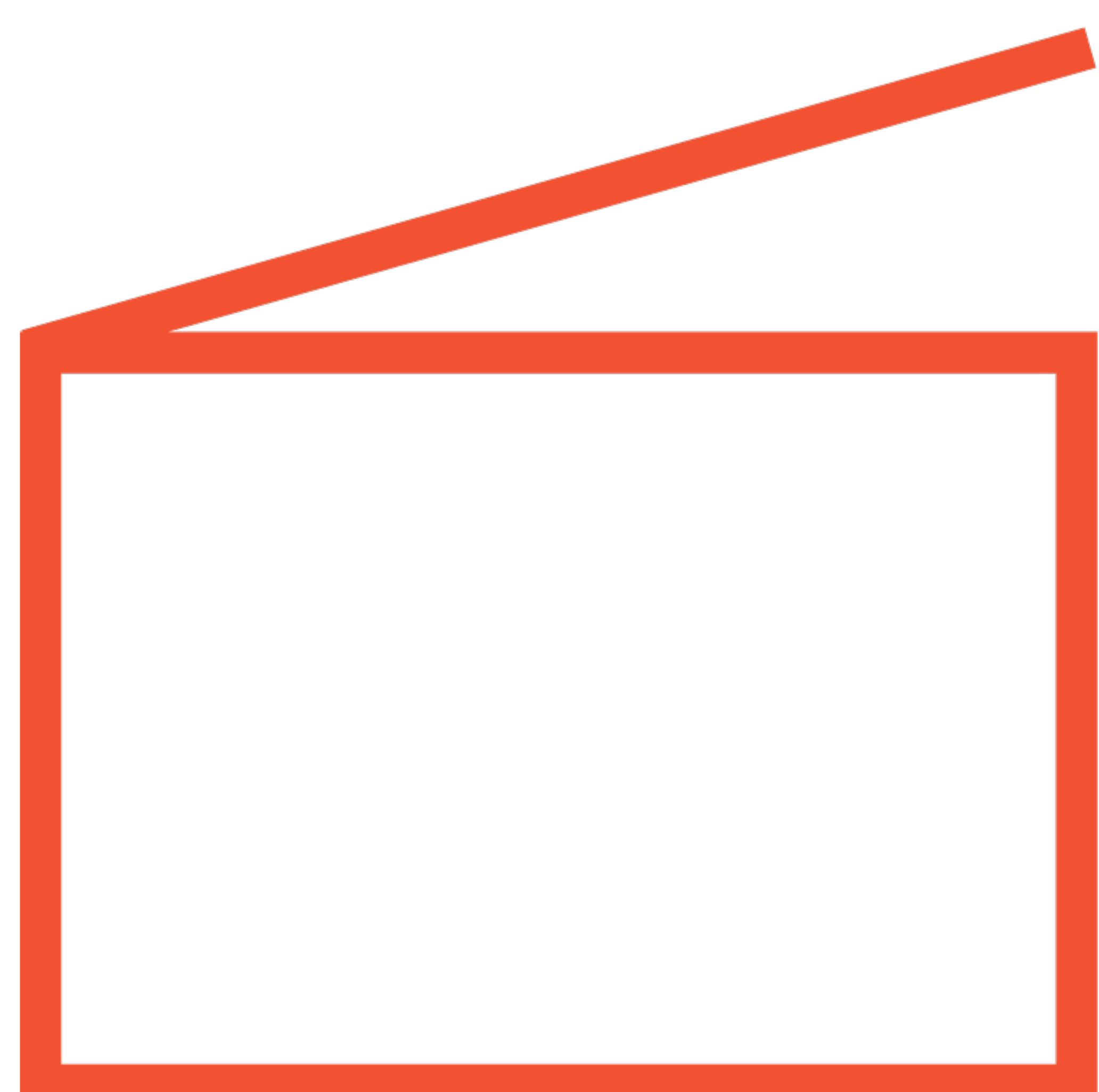
To a video producer who is used to working with video the traditional way, a script means something completely different than it does to us who work with text-focused video.

The purpose of a traditional script is to pinpoint what needs to be captured by the camera, and thus traditional scripts contain various descriptions of what's going to happen in the video, what scenes need to be included, and what dialogue or monologue is needed. The script can also contain notes on camera angles, orientations, and notes for post-production.

In a text-focused video, all this information is superfluous. When you're no longer dependent upon footage since you can make your video based on text, you no longer need to think about camera angles or post-production.

It is, however, extremely important to focus on the script and the story since its the main driving force of the video.

And it's that kind of video script we're talking about in this e-book.



Build a solid foundation for your script

When we tell you to start with the script, we obviously don't mean that the first thing you should do is to start hammering away at your keyboard.

As with everything else, you first need to think about a few fundamental things, and when you have those things figured out, your content creation will become much easier and your video much better.

1. Test your stories

Letting creativity flow when making content for social channels is incredible important. But it's also important to be tough on yourself.

Before you start writing your script, you need to decide with story you want to tell.

Where to find stories and how to tell a story are two topics that we talk about extensively in our e-book "[Storytelling in a social world](#)", which you are more than welcome to download for tons of inspiration.

But how do you know you're onto something good?

Many creators describe this sensation as something they feel in their entire body; they just know they have a great idea. It's these kinds of feelings you should listen to, even though they're difficult to implement.

A piece of advice is to ask yourself these questions:

- **Why would anyone want to watch the video?**
- **Why would anyone want to share the video?**
- **What should the viewer remember after watching the video?**
- **How does the idea match with what you know about your target audience?**
- **Is this interesting to anyone else except to those who work at our company?**
- **Are you passionate about your idea? (While dedication is good, it can also make you overestimate how interesting your idea really is)?**

2. Keep a close eye on your target audience

No content turns out well if you don't know who you're making it for.

When you produce content for social channels, it's nowadays more important than ever to understand exactly who you're making the content for.

The competition is so fierce when it comes to social channels that no one is going to spend time watching your video if it doesn't appeal directly to them.

We often say that on social media there are no “personas”, only “people”. That's why you really must put extra effort into getting to know your target audience. Who they are, what they dream of, what problems they have.

On social channels, you also need to remember that:

- **The audience is impatient.** When it comes to video on social channels, you should never wait to get to the point.
- **The audience is absent-minded.** Maybe you're used to competing for attention with competitors and other players in your industry. But on social media, you're competing against the recipient's entire life.

Why should anyone watch your video instead of looking at their friend's wedding photo, discussing the results of the latest game, or greeting a relative on their birthday? To stand a chance, your video — and your script — must be relevant and interesting.

3. Do one thing at a time

There is a golden rule that is easily forgotten in the process of making videos for social channels:

1 subject + 1 target audience = 1 video.

The biggest mistake that people do when they write scripts for social channels is to cram too much into one single video.

– It's often tempting to try to tell many stories in one single video or to tell your stories to several target audiences at once. This seldom turns out well, says Magnus Dahl, Creative Director at social media agency KIT.

That's why it's important to remember the golden rule 1 subject + 1 target audience = 1 video. It's better to focus on fewer things, not the other way around.

But what do you do when you want to say many things to many different micro-target audiences?

The answer is of course: you make more videos!

“It’s often tempting to try to tell many stories in one single video. This seldom turns out well.”

Magnus Dahl
Creative Director, KIT

4. Decide what you want to achieve

Your script will look entirely different depending on what you want the video to “achieve”.

We're guessing that you have already thought about what business-related goals you want to achieve with video, and why you're making this video.

Should it build reach, trigger e-book downloads, or generate more sales?

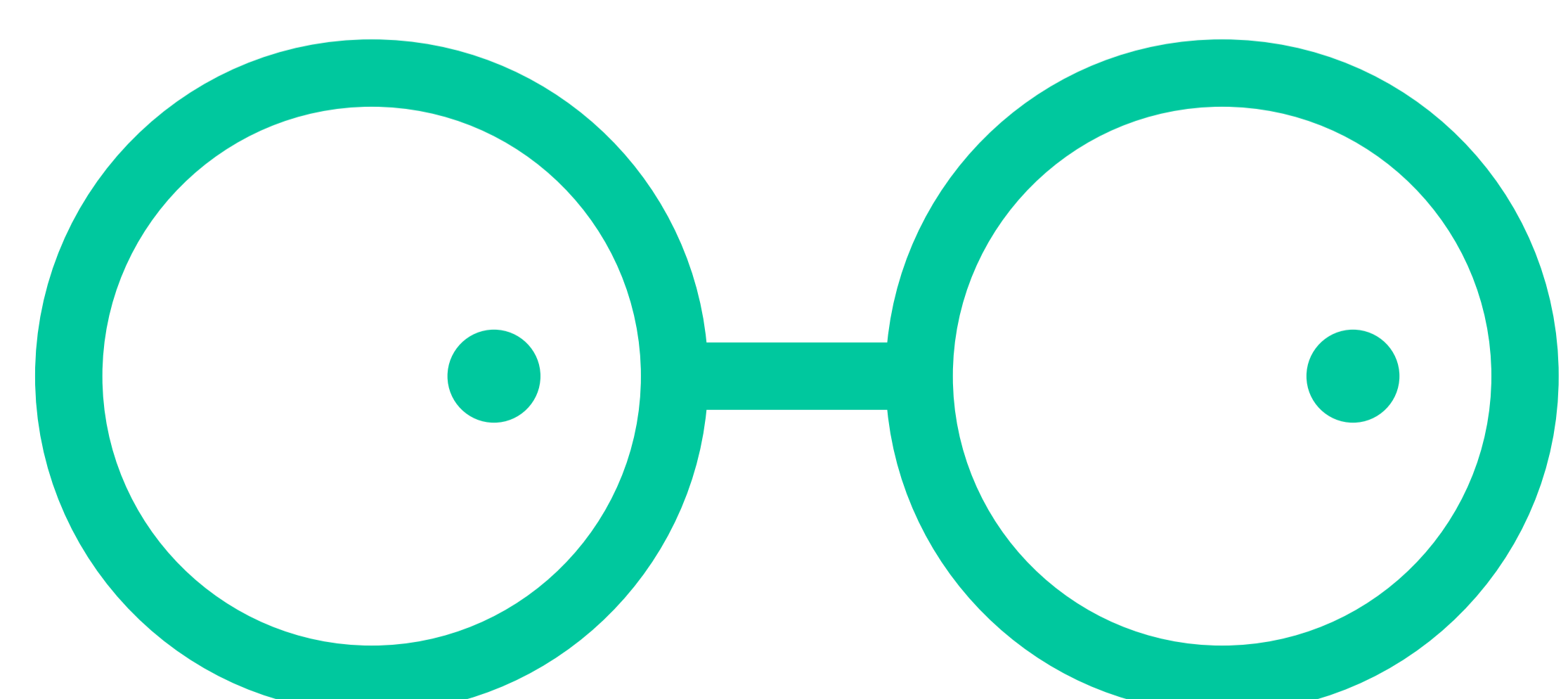
Deciding on the right KPIs for your videos is a topic that we write more about in the e-book ["Winning with video in a social world"](#), which you can download [here](#).

But that's not really what we're referring to in this instance. In the script stage, we rather need to figure out what feelings or reactions we want to evoke in the recipient.

Your tone, choice of words, tempo—well, most things, really—will look entirely different depending on if you want the viewer to:

- ...learn something**
- ...change their attitude**
- ...act**
- ...feel something**
- ...simply be entertained?**

If you don't know what effect you want to have on the viewer, the viewer won't know either.



Structure your story

It's been thousands of years since philosopher Aristotle determined that a story is composed of three parts: a beginning, middle, and an end.

But it's still applicable to a video in social media.

Yes, your video is a story

Surely, a 30-second video can't be a story? Of course it is, and if you want to write a great script, you'll have to regard it as just that.

Thinking of your content as stories will help you immensely along the way. Imagine, for instance, skilled ad creators — they are experts at telling an entire story in one single picture or just a few words. Naturally, your video is also a story, and it must be regarded as such.

That's why you should start with structuring your content.

- **Make a list** of what you want to include in the video.
- **Put everything into the order** that best helps the viewer. If you, for instance, start with a question, you should end the video with the answer.
- **It's also important to think of every video as an entity**, a finished piece of information. You want the target audience to understand the message and receive all the necessary information in one place. On social, you can never predict what will show up in your audience's feeds, so if you plan on creating a series of different videos, you should never expect that someone who watches video 1 also will see video 2, or that someone who watches video 5 already has seen video 4.



2 clever journalist tricks

Journalists are often experts at expressing themselves concisely while also getting people intrigued. Here are two clever tricks you can steal today!

1. Put the most important information first

If you're reading an article in a newspaper, you should be able to understand what it concerns through simply reading the headline, lead paragraph, and perhaps a section of the running text, or a quote.

The core of this method is based on the pragmatic fact that people seldom read an entire article or watch an entire video. If your message is in the end, there's a great risk that no one will see it.

This is a good trick to know for any situation where you want to get a message through, and when the viewer doesn't have to get the full context. The trick is less useful in such instances when the audience must understand the chain of events, or in instances when there are arguments and counterarguments. When it comes to straight news, the trick is unbeatable.

*Want more tips on effective storytelling techniques?
Download our [ebook on storytelling here](#).*

2. Go backwards

Do you like documentaries? Or longer articles? If so, chances are that you're already familiar with this storytelling trick.

Told simply, the method consists of two steps:

1. You say how something ends, or how the situation is today. "Anna is in prison."
2. You jump back in time and tell the events that led up to point 1 in chronological order. "This story began 10 years ago when Anna met Sanna at a party."

This method works very well even for short videos, especially if you want to explain why something is the way it is, or to sort out the reasons behind an event or a fact.

Start big

Everyone who works with social media is painfully aware that we only have a few seconds to catch the viewers' attention to make them stop scrolling.

So how do we do that?

We make sure that the video starts with a bang!

First: Dare to try

At Storykit, we're always preaching about how important it is to have the courage to test your material on social channels. One of the clearest examples of where trying different things can have a huge effect, is the start of your video.

Because the introduction to your video will have such a big effect on how many people actually watch it, it's often worth trying a few different variations.

Over time, you will gain a better sense of what works for your particular audience.

With a tool like Storykit, it's incredibly easy to make the same video, and then try out a couple of different starts for the video to see what happens.

If you work with paid distribution, you can a/b test your versions immediately, but if you mainly work with organic distribution, it might be a better idea to publish your different versions every few days, so each version gets some airtime.

Let's look at a couple of different video starts that you can try!



5 hooks that'll make the audience stop scrolling

Starting your video with a hook, makes the viewer, reader, or listener stop for your particular video, text, or song.

Good copywriters usually say that the whole point of your first sentence is to get the reader to move on to the second sentence, which should get the reader on to the third sentence... and so on.

Since your videos start automatically in social feeds, the same rule applies: your first sentence in the script should make the viewer hang on to the next sentence and the next...

That's why you have to make the start of every video extraordinary.

But how do you do that?

Let's look at five different "hooks" that can help you hook your viewers!

1. Thought-provoking questions

People are curious. If you manage to ask a question that tickles your viewers' minds, they'll likely stick around to the end for the answer. If you start with a question, however, you shouldn't make any of the following mistakes:

- **Taking too long to answer the question.** Have you every watched a long video with a lot of irrelevant information only to get the answer to your question way too far into the video? Has that experience promoted trust between you and the creator? Probably not. Don't do that.
- **Not answering the question at all.** If you ask a question in the beginning, you should make sure to answer it in the video.

2. A bold assertion

If you start your video with a bold statement, it really does not matter if the viewer agrees or not. They will still nod and want to look further.

Here, of course, we're not talking about provoking for the sake of provoking, but showing that you have a clear opinion is a great way to engage the viewer.

3. An inspiring quote

A quote always signals that there is a person behind the words, which is always relationship-building towards the viewer. Therefore, look for good quotes to start the video with and dare to test it.

4. Introduce the problem

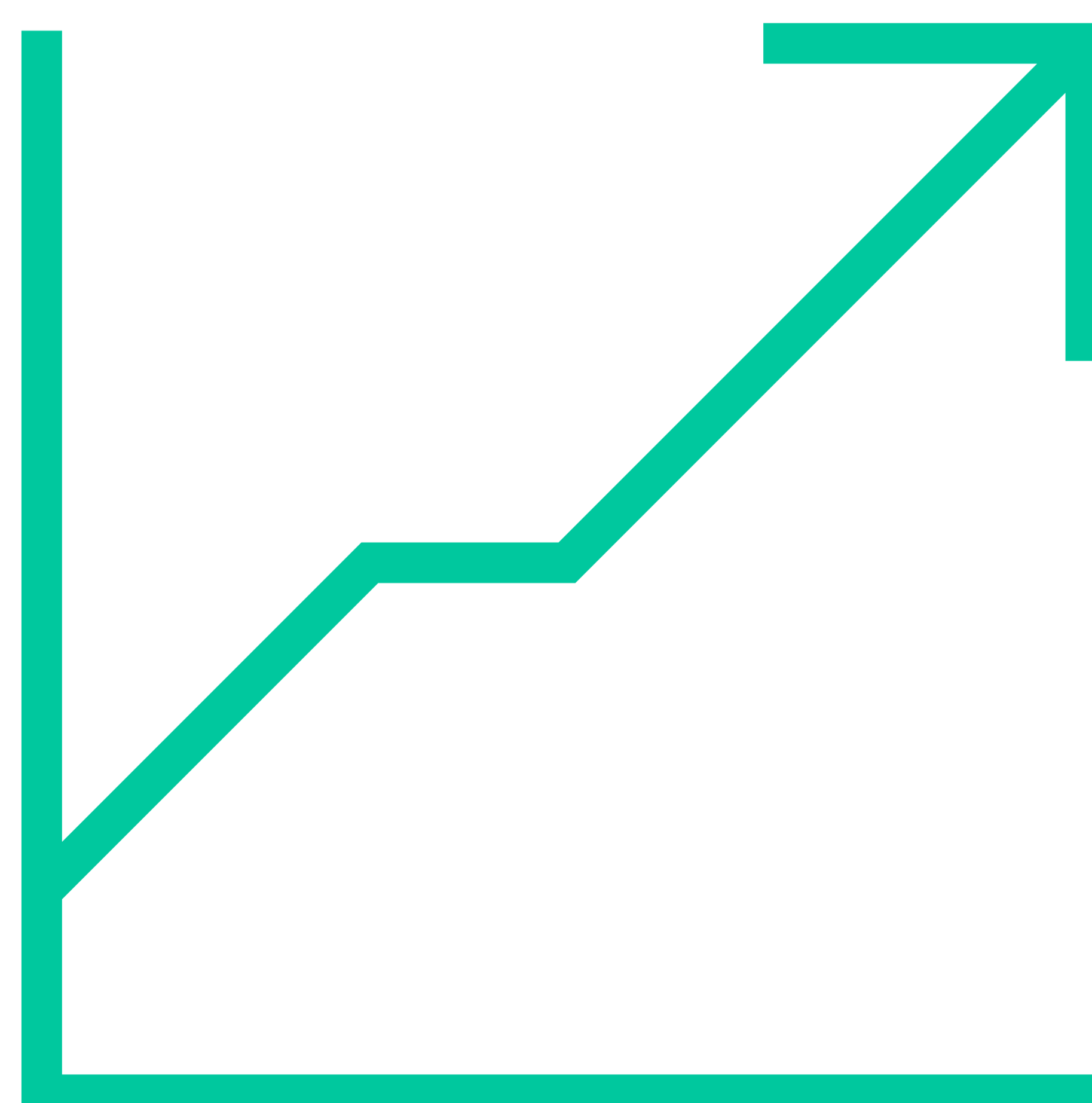
Immediately showing that you're aware of the problems your audience needs to solve (preferably with the help of your product) is usually an effective way to get people hooked.

Here it's good to really think about your micro-target audiences and dare to talk about specific problems to stand out of the crowd.

5. Facts and stats

We like to see clear figures, facts, and stats. It creates a sense of credibility and newsworthiness.

Instead of telling them what facts they will see, try throwing the actual number at them on the very first slide!

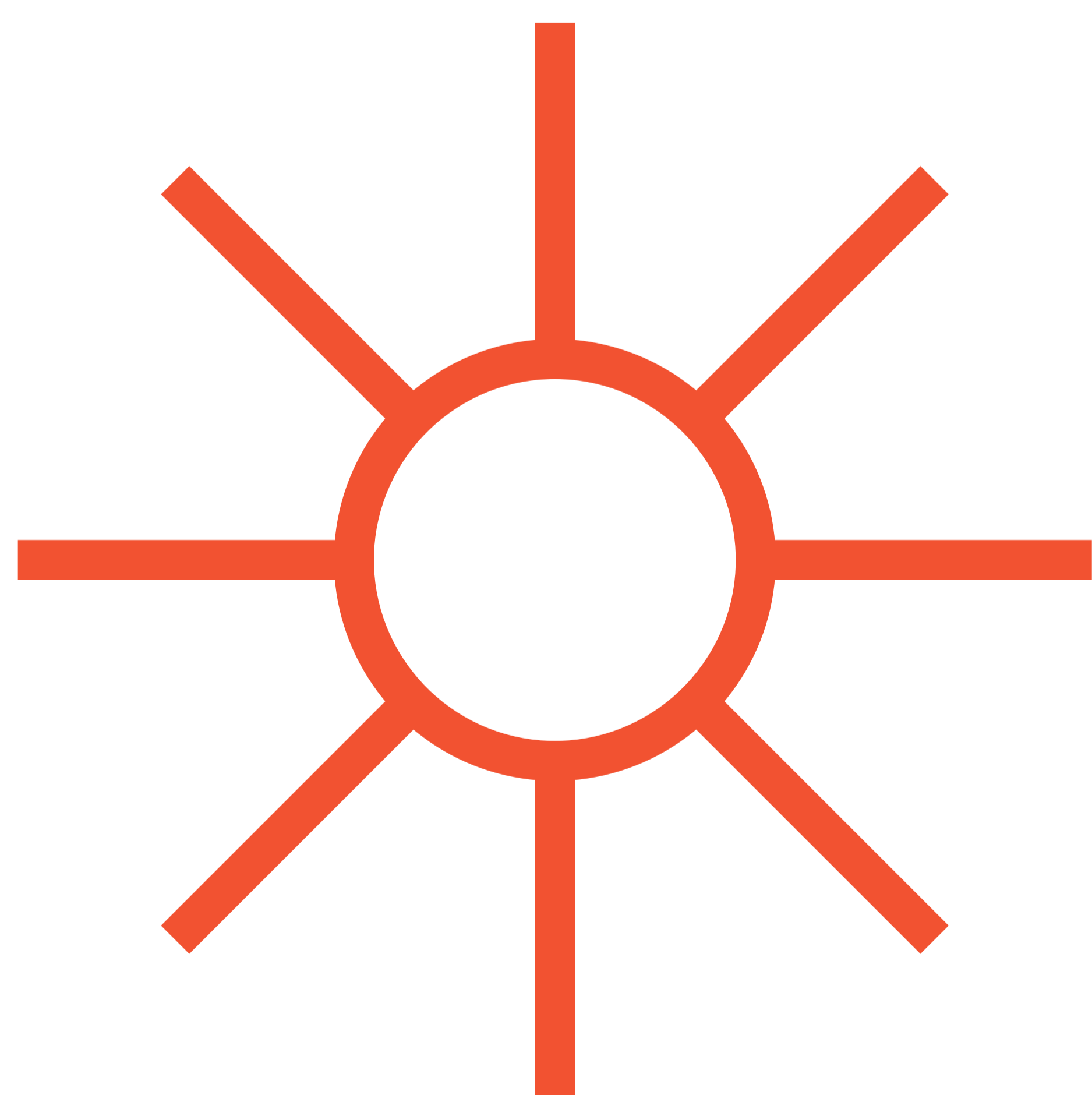


Using headlines in videos

Alright, a “hook” can be good—but what about traditional headlines? Well, of course you should still use headlines!

Since text-driven video is often made by people who are used to writing text, a headline might feel as the most natural introduction for the video. And yes, a good headline can capture the viewer's attention as well as any "hook" can.

Here are some things to keep in mind when writing your video headline:



Be clear. No viewer is a mind reader and if you formulate yourself vaguely, the viewers will scroll past you.

Keep your promises. No brand has ever managed to build a lasting relationship with its readers and viewers through what's called "clickbait", i. e. , promising something magnificent or surprising in the headline, only to not deliver it in the video.

Dare to use angles. Having the courage to use a good and clear angle in your headline is always effective. Highlight details that are exciting and interesting, what exactly is the "idea" with this video?

Highlight the benefits. Does your video contain tips, tricks, or anything else that the viewer will learn from? Say it in the headline. There is a reason why the internet is full of headlines of the style: "6 reasons to... ", "3 tips like... " or "10 facts like... ". Try it!

Avoid headings. A headline is a headline, and it should be enticing— a heading simply explains what is to come. Even if your video is about the latest industry report, the heading "Latest industry report – conclusions and analyses", is simply not a good headline.

Work with your words

Just because we work with text, does not mean that we're always skilled copywriters. But which wording we use in our videos matters.

Don't have a headache over it! Thankfully, there are many good rules of thumb to abide by.

9 tips for your script writing

Improve your script writing with these nine recommendations!

1. Kill your darlings

Get to the point, and get rid of everything that's unnecessary. No script has ever been made worse by being shortened.

A common writing tip to get started with your script is to "let the text flow". Write down everything you want to say and everything you want to include in the script. But be prepared that you will have to be harsh with the text once it's finished.

An advantage for the viewer when watching a video instead of reading a text is that the creator has had to think about it. If you only have 60 seconds, you simply have to make sure to sift through the most important things in what you want to say.

– Every sentence in the script must be so strong that it can stand alone.

That's what Magnus Dahl at KIT says. He usually reworks his script by asking himself: "do I really need to say this? "

– The answer is usually "no", and you can remove half of the script

2. Keep it simple

Do you like to use complex words and expressions? You better don't do that in your video script.

A classic old copywriter rule is to "write as you speak". Of course, this does not mean that you should fill the text with a lot of "eeeeh", "errrr" or "hmmm", but that you should write so that people understand.

But doesn't everyone do this? Quite the opposite. Even seasoned writers are sometimes struck by the strange instinct to formulate themselves too awkwardly.

The problem with this is that if you express yourself in a complex way, it'll be harder for the recipient to understand the message.

Instead, do the following:

- Write as if you were explaining the subject to a friend
- Be clear and concise
- Use simple words and short sentences
- Avoid industry jargon and abbreviations that only insiders would understand

3. Change the tempo

No one likes to get through a long text where the tempo is the same all the time. The same goes for your video.

The tempo of a social video is often quite high, simply because you have so little time to say what you want. But even in a 60-second video, it's generally a good idea to vary your story by changing your tempo.

In Storykit, you can vary the narrative tempo by using different slide types, or by changing the duration of a specific slide.

But even when writing your script, you can easily make sure to vary the tempo. You do this, for example, by alternating longer and shorter phrases.

In a video, one or two words left alone can have a much greater effect than ten exclamation points.

4. Use active form

Choosing the active form ("we launch... ") instead of the passive form ("is launched... ") does a lot for how your video is perceived.

The benefits of writing in the active form are many:

- It puts your viewer in the moment

- You give the text "life"
- Active form is often clearer and simpler than passive
- The text is perceived as more confident and persuading
- You use fewer words and are more concise
- The text gets a better tempo

5. It's all about "you"

Addressing the reader directly is an effective way to get close to them in your video. For the scriptwriter, it's always a good exercise to try to turn the script to "you" instead of focusing on "me" or "we" all the time. What happens, for example, if you are to launch a product while trying to direct the words towards "you"? Well, instead of writing "our platform makes this super quick..." you have to automatically focus on the recipient and maybe instead write "now you no longer need to spend your time on... "

6. Think about the tone

A general tip when writing a script is to have a positive tone. If you use negative expressions or negations, try to replace them with positive ones to make your audience perceive your video in a much nicer way. Of course, there are brands with a very specific tonality, and there are also occasions, purposes, contexts, and topics that might require a custom tone. But if you have the option: choose to be positive.

7. Include a call to action

Daring to tell the viewer what you want him or her to do is not something you need to be ashamed of in our fast-paced information society. On the contrary, the reader often wants to know what the content really leads to. Can I read more? Download? Buy? Get a demo?

8. Read aloud

When your script is finished: read it aloud to yourself. If you get stuck on something, the viewer will probably do the same. If the tempo feels slow, then the tempo is probably slow in your finished video as well. There is no better way to test your script than to read it.

9. Check with a colleague

The final thing you should do is ask a colleague to read through your script. In addition to proofreading it, you want your colleague to:

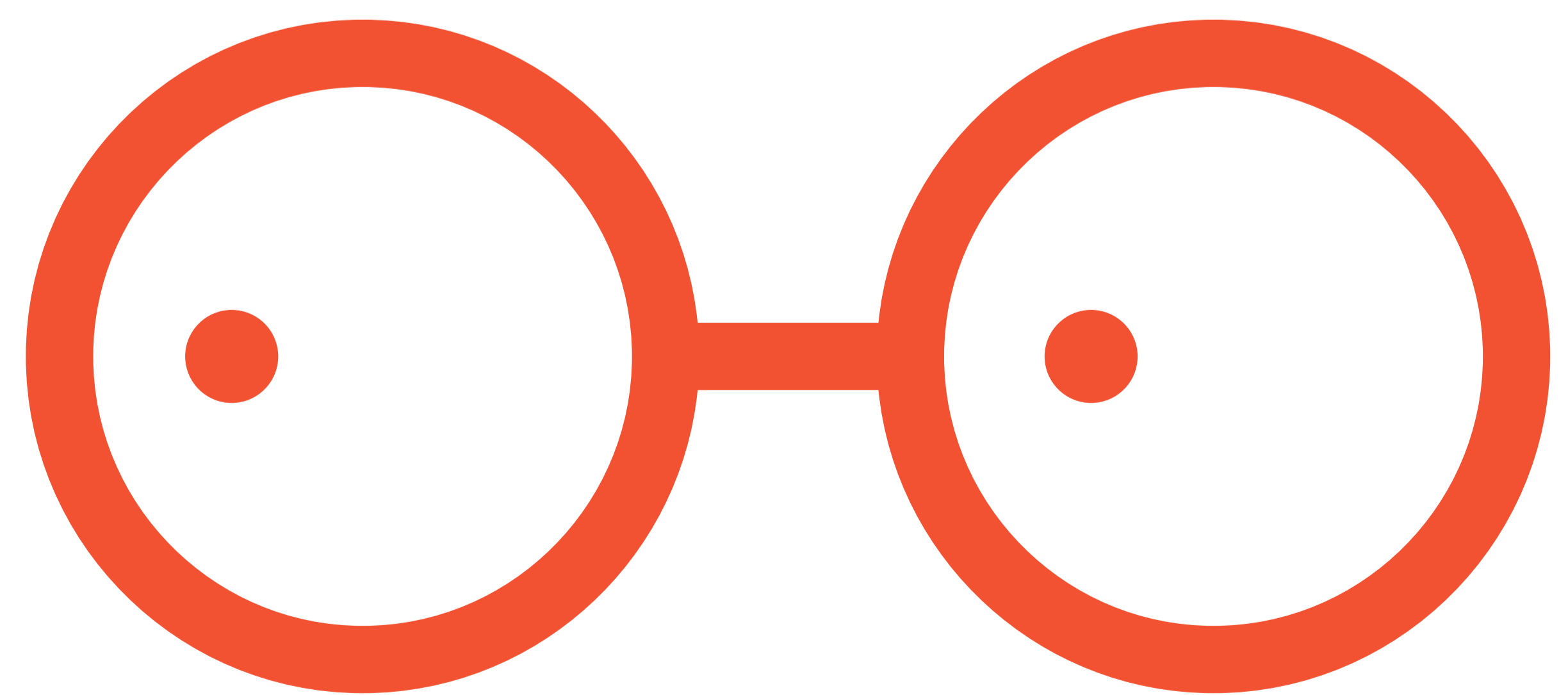
- Check if there is anything more you can remove
- Check if you have deleted too much. When you have edited too much of your own text, the risk is that it becomes incomprehensible



Things to avoid

If you're truly confident in your script writing, you probably know what to do and what not to do. But as a reminder, there are a few things you should avoid in your videos.

- **Rhetorical questions.** Using rhetorical questions, i. e. , questions that do not need to be answered can be a fantastic trick to hook an audience. In a 60-second video, however, there is a great risk that they're just confusing. So, if you're not entirely sure: avoid them.
- **Tautologies.** Stacking words that mean the same thing only takes up space in your video. For example, you don't need to write "warm up", "serious crisis" or "completely unique", it's more than enough to use "warm", "crisis" or "unique".
- **Redundancy.** Verbiage, or the so-called word salads, should of course be avoided. Don't write "because of the fact that I... " but "because I...".
- **Dependent clauses.** In a video, it's often better to end the sentence and start a new one. You increase the tempo and simplify things for the viewer.
- **Headings.** We mentioned headings already, so as a reminder: boring headings should always be avoided throughout your video unless you make a video purely for informational purposes.
- **Too much text.** If a slide in your video feels "full of text", it probably does have too much text. Instead, try to shorten it, spread it out, and simplify it.



Or... why not let AI work with your words?

Text in. Video out. In Storykit you can skip the script writing part completely and just let our AI create the script you want. Sounds like magic? It isn't.

Throughout this ebook you've learned how to create a captivating script. But there is a shortcut that can help you work 100x faster: AI. And we know, AI can sound terrifying, but in Storykit you will still have 100% control.

– We've combined AI's proven strength in understanding text with decades of editorial experience. Input any source material into the tool, choose which output you want, and then you're done, says Fredrik Strömberg, CPO at Storykit.

This means that Storykit will provide high-quality output and that the AI won't confabulate content. Furthermore, you can always make adjustments to the AI generated script.

– The final decision needs to be yours and that's why you get to click on the button when you are completely satisfied.

As a result, users can trust that their messaging always remains on-brand.

“Input any source material into Storykit, choose which output you want – then you're done.”

Fredrik Strömberg, VP Product at Storykit.

Want to get hands on with video?

Storykit here. We hope you enjoyed the ebook.

So, what now? Well, we could tell you all the things you can do in Storykit. Or, you could start creating videos now, for free.

Sign up for your personal Storykit account, and make your first video within minutes. 100% free, no strings attached.

Let's Storykit it.

[Start creating your videos here.](#)

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