

AI Agents & n8n

Build Your First
AI Agent in 30 Minutes

The Robots Are Coming

19 March 2026

Ann Stanley

Founder & CTO, Anicca Digital | Co-founder & CMO, Anicca Insights



Anicca's Two Pillars: Digital & AI Solutions

anicca digital

AI-Powered Marketing & Business Growth Solutions

Providing data-driven digital marketing solutions for the last 19 years for e-commerce and established brands. Now integrating AI into everything we do to improve productivity and results for our clients.

Strategy

Search

Social

Shopping

Skills

Training and skills development

1,000 learners trained in digital marketing since January 2022, plus bespoke and AI training courses.

Digital Marketing

AI Training

Bespoke Courses

anicca ai & insights

Services

Not only identifying what businesses need to do, but building the solutions - automations, agents and infrastructure to make it happen.

AI Strategy

Consultancy

AI Agents & Automation

AI Training

Thursday AI Club

SaaS & Product Development

Data products, analytics dashboards and AI-powered tools built for marketers.

Armadello Analytics

Secret-Agents.ai

AI App Development

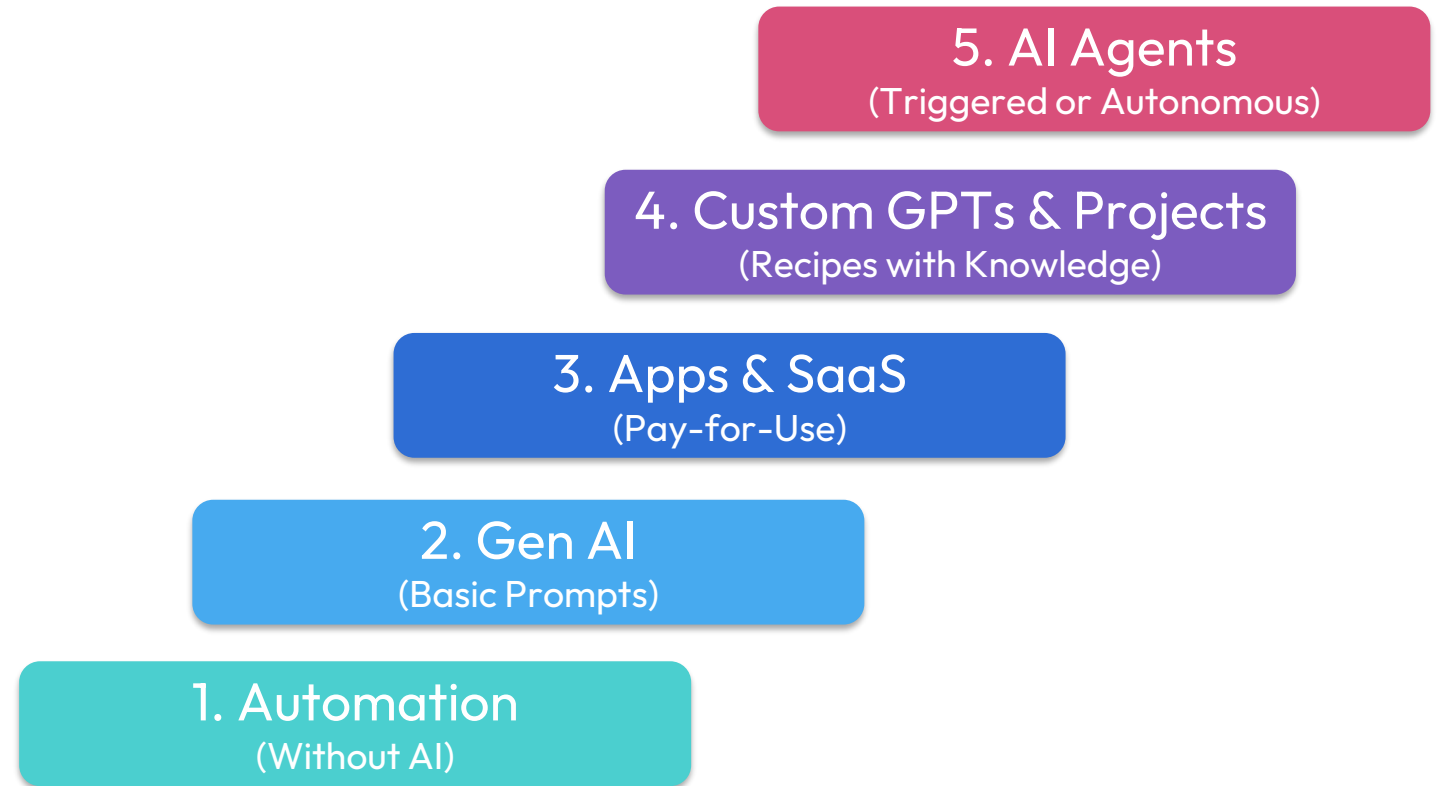
Where Are You on the AI Ladder?

85% of UK businesses use ChatGPT — but 80% haven't tried AI agents.

The UK is 6th-7th globally.

Today we jump to rung 5.

- 1. Automation** — Thank-you emails, CRM syncs, Zapier. No AI.
- 2. Generative AI** — ChatGPT / Claude for writing & research.
- 3. Apps & SaaS** — Mid Journey, HeyGen, Otter, Perplexity.
- 4. Custom GPTs & Projects** — Knowledge base + system prompts
- 5. AI Agents** — Triggered automations with an LLM brain.



What the *!#? is an AI Agent?

The term “AI Agent” is misused and misunderstood. These are the main components of an AI agent.

1. A step-by-step automation that **does things for you** — not just answers questions
2. Combines a **trigger + brain** (LLM) + **tools** (apps & APIs)
3. Observes, plans, acts — like a **24/7 intern** that never forgets
4. Can **coordinate other agents** — one manager, multiple specialists
5. **Semi-autonomous** (humans involved) → **fully autonomous** (acts alone)
6. The more autonomous, the more powerful — **but the more trust required**

The AI Agent Spectrum – Simple/predictable to Autonomous

SIMPLE / PREDICTABLE

AUTONOMOUS

1. Brainless Automation

No AI needed.
Triggered by events.
Predictable & reproducible.
Set up and leave.

2. Simple AI Agent

LLM brain in the middle.
Triggered by form or chat.
Human-in-the-loop.
e.g. The Joke Machine

3. Multi-Step Agent

Drive sheets, environmental cues.
Multiple steps.
Humans review between stages.
Content creation, social posting

4. Structured Input

Prompting is done for you:

- Simple Forms (secret-agents.ai)
- SaaS Apps (Otter, HeyGen)
- Iterative (Custom GPTs)

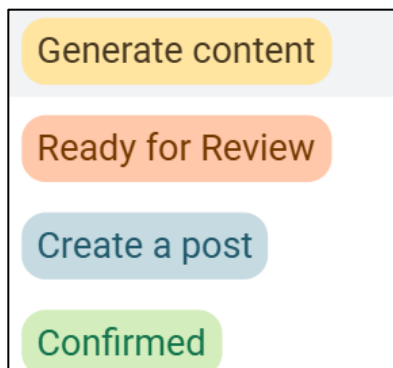
5. Autonomous worker

Non-deterministic VA.
Finds files, browses web, creates content.
e.g. Manus, ChatGPT Agent

6. Personal Assistant

Full PA. Library of skills & reproducible tasks.
Works with you iteratively. e.g. Claude Code + Skills

Real Example: Social Media Content Agent



This automation workflow uses:

- **Triggers** (what starts it),
- **Nodes** (the building blocks),
- **Connectors** (passing data between them),
- **Credentials** (logging into services),
- **Switches** (branching logic),
- **Dynamic Fields/variables** (pulling data from previous steps).
- You can test each node individually with **Execute Step**

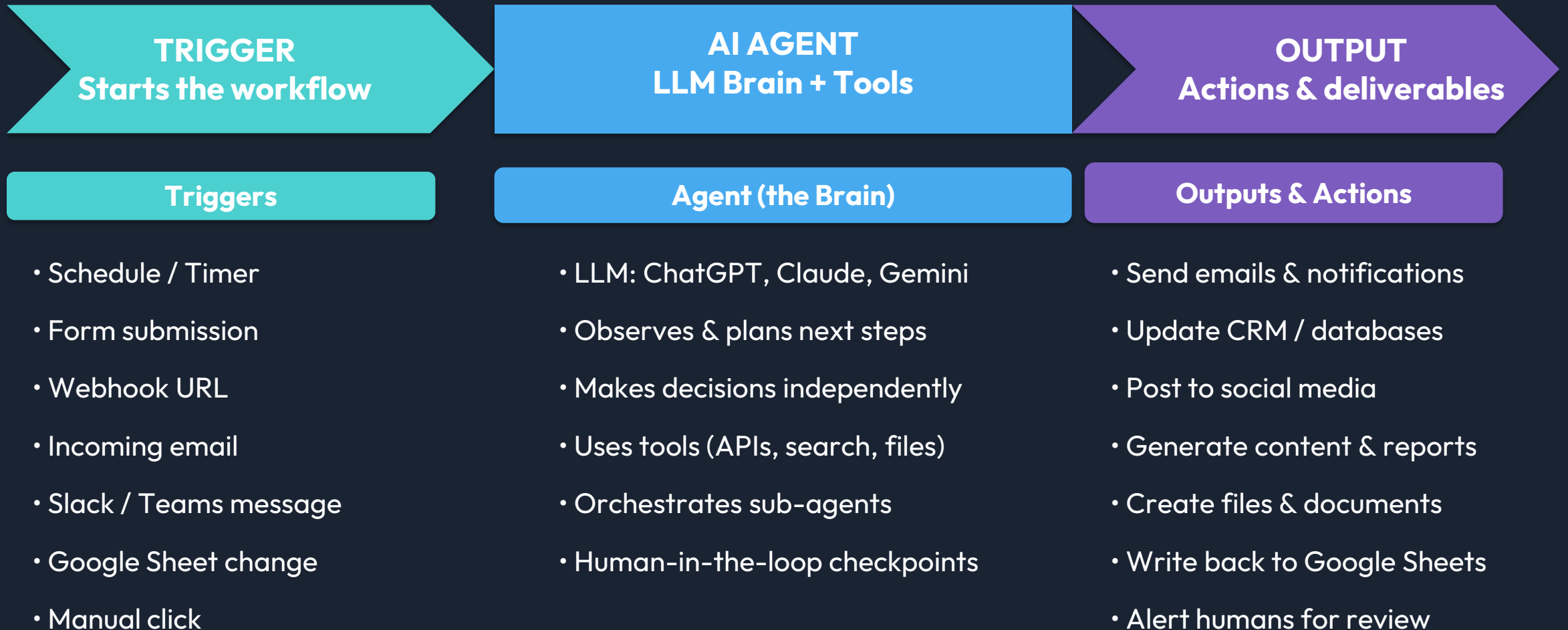
Real Example: Controller sheet with input status & outputs

| | A | B | C | D |
|----|--|---|---|------------------|
| 1 | Content_Idea | LinkedIn_Post_Content | LinkedIn_Image_URL | Contoller |
| | AI tools transforming ecommerce marketing | <p>🚀 AI is rewriting the playbook for eCommerce marketing—and it's happening faster than you think.</p> <p>From hyper-personalized customer journeys to predictive product recommendations, AI tools are not just optimizing campaigns—they're driving double-digit growth for forward-thinking brands. 📧 🧠</p> <p>We're seeing it firsthand. Whether it's automating ad creative testing, refining segmentation, or unlocking deeper customer insights, AI is no longer optional—it's essential.</p> <p>Want to stay ahead of the curve? Make sure you're not just using AI... but using it strategically.</p> <p>🌱 What tools are changing the game for your eCommerce business? 👉 Share your thoughts or DM me to learn how we're helping clients scale smarter with AI.</p> <p>#AI #EcommerceMarketing #DigitalMarketing #MarTech #AgencyLife #ArtificialIntelligence #GrowthHacking #MarketingAutomation</p> | https://oaidalleapiprodscus.blob | Create a post |
| 3 | Content creation at scale with generative AI | | | Generate content |
| 4 | CRO tactics for improving onsite performance | | | Generate content |
| 5 | Dynamic pricing and promotion strategies | | | |
| 6 | Email automation and lifecycle marketing | | | Generate content |
| 7 | Leveraging first-party data post-cookie | | | Ready for Review |
| 8 | Personalisation strategies in ecommerce | | | Create a post |
| 9 | Predictive analytics for ecommerce campaigns | | | Confirmed |
| 10 | Retail media networks and their rise | | | |
| 11 | The role of chatbots and conversational commerce | | | |
| 12 | TikTok Shop and the future of social commerce | | | |

Human-in-the-loop:

The sheet acts as the **control panel**. Inputs, AI generated outputs, human reviews, agent status.

Components of an **AI Agent**



Real-World Agency **Workflows**

Same pattern as the Joke Machine — just bigger. Trigger → AI → Action. We run 30+ active n8n workflows at Anicca.

LinkedIn Content Agent

Sheets → Switch → AI → LinkedIn
Controller column. AI writes, human reviews, agent publishes.

Gmail Triage Bot

Gmail → Claude → Teams → Draft
Polls inbox every 30 min, grades urgency, drafts replies.

Voice-to-Action

Slack → Switch → AI → To-do
Voice note from car. AI transcribes, classifies, adds to tasks.

Client Reporting

Cron → API → AI → Email
Scheduled pull from Google Ads/GA4, AI writes narrative.

Practical demo of n8n

What is n8n?

Open-source workflow automation.
Connect apps, automate tasks, add AI
— all visually. Our tool of choice at
Anicca & Secret-Agents.ai.



Visual Builder

Drag-and-drop. No coding needed. JavaScript when you want it.



400+ Integrations

Gmail, Sheets, Slack, HubSpot, Notion + any API via HTTP.



Self-Host or Cloud

Cloud = instant start. Docker = unlimited, 10× cheaper.



AI-Native

Built-in OpenAI, Claude & Gemini nodes. Add a brain to any workflow.

Getting started: n8n Cloud account

- **Start with n8n Cloud** — zero setup, nothing to install, works in your browser in 2 minutes
- **Free trial is 14 days** — no credit card needed, enough time to build your first few workflows and follow along today
- **Starter plan is ~£20/month** — gives you 2,500 executions, 5 active workflows and 7 days of execution history
- **If you get serious, self-host** — download the free Community Edition, run it via Docker, and you get unlimited workflows, unlimited executions, no monthly fee ever
- **Self-hosting is how agencies scale** — we run our own n8n instance at Anicca with 30+ active workflows at zero per-execution cost
- **Start cloud, graduate to self-hosted** — learn the basics without any tech setup, then move when you're ready

The screenshot shows the n8n Pricing page with a dark theme. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Product, Use cases, Docs, Community, Enterprise, and Pricing. A user profile icon shows '179,755' and buttons for 'Sign in' and 'Get Started'. The main heading is 'Pricing' with a sub-note: 'All plans include unlimited users & workflows and every integration. Pricing based on monthly workflow executions, regardless of complexity.' Below this, there are two radio buttons for 'Monthly' (selected) and 'Annually (Save 17%)'. The pricing is divided into four columns:

- Starter:** £20 /mo, billed annually. 2.5k workflow executions with unlimited steps. Includes: 1 shared project, 5 concurrent executions, Unlimited users, 50 AI Workflow Builder credits, Forum support. Hosted by n8n.
- Pro:** £50 /mo, billed annually. Custom number of workflow executions. Includes: 3 shared projects, 20 concurrent executions, 7 days of insights, 150 AI Workflow Builder credits, Admin roles, Global variables, Workflow history, Execution search. Hosted by n8n.
- Business:** £576 /mo, billed annually. 40k workflow executions with unlimited steps. Includes: 6 shared projects, SSO, SAML and LDAP, 30 days of insights, AI Workflow Builder coming soon, Different environments, Scaling options, Version control using Git, Forum support. Self-hosted.
- Enterprise:** Contact Sales. Custom number of workflow executions. Includes: Unlimited shared projects, 200+ concurrent executions, 365 days of insights, 1000 AI Workflow Builder credits (only available on n8n cloud), External secret store integration, Log streaming, Extended data retention, Dedicated support with SLA, Invoice billing. Hosted by n8n or Self-hosted.

At the bottom, a note states: 'Pay for full executions, not for each step. Unlike other tools that charge per step or user, n8n lets you build freely and only pay when a workflow runs from start to finish.' A 'Read more' button is located at the bottom right.

You start by adding a new workflow

The screenshot shows a dashboard with a sidebar on the left containing navigation icons: a red workflow icon, a plus sign, a home icon, a refresh icon, and a list icon. The main content area is titled "Overview" and includes a sub-header "All the workflows, credentials and data tables you have access to". A summary row displays five metrics: "Prod. executions" (0), "Failed prod. executions" (0), "Failure rate" (0%), "Time saved" (indicated by "--" and an info icon), and "Run time (avg.)" (0s). Below this is a tabbed interface with "Workflows" selected, and other tabs for "Credentials", "Executions", "Variables", and "Data tables". A search bar and a "Sort by last created" dropdown are present. A single workflow is listed: "Professional Blog Content Generator with SEO and Email Delivery", with a toggle for "Personal" and "Inactive" (currently off), and a menu icon.

Overview
All the workflows, credentials and data tables you have access to

| | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|
| Prod. executions | Failed prod. executions | Failure rate | Time saved | Run time (avg.) |
| 0 | 0 | 0% | -- ⓘ | 0s |

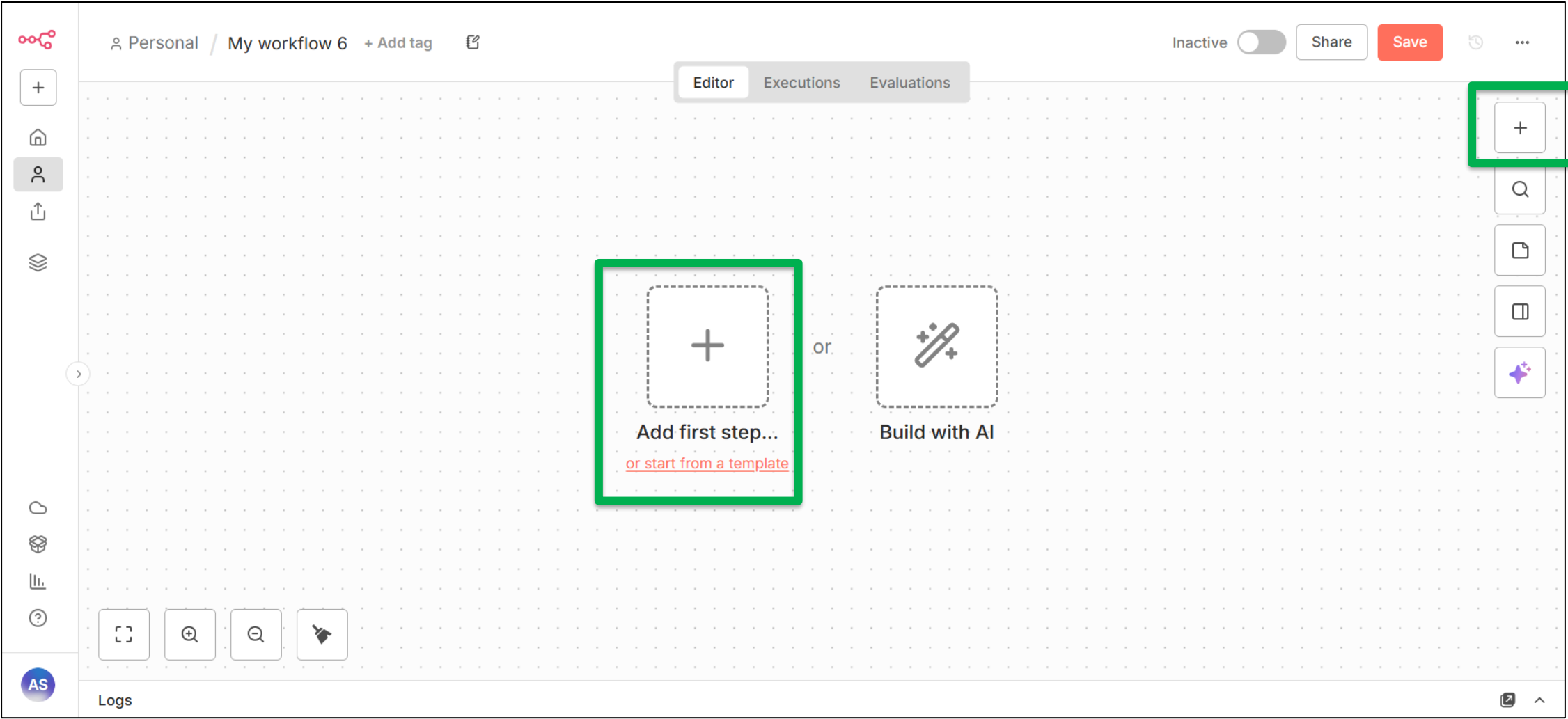
Workflows Credentials Executions Variables Data tables

Search Sort by last created

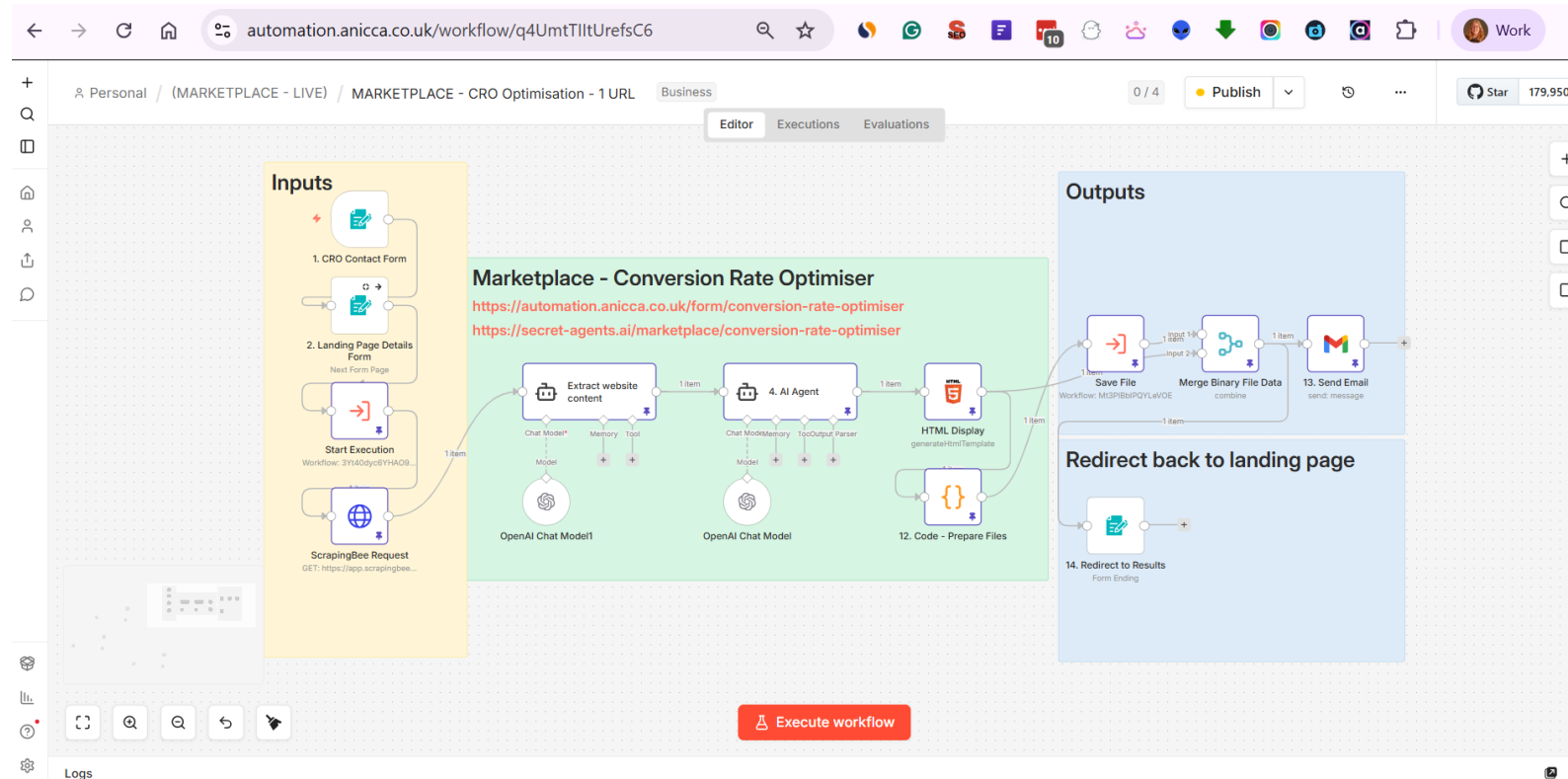
Professional Blog Content Generator with SEO and Email Delivery
Last updated 3 months ago | Created 15 December, 2025

Personal Inactive

Add triggers & nodes to your workflow



n8n Core Concepts – The 4 Building Blocks



1. Workflows

A chain of connected nodes.
Each workflow is one automation.
Trigger → Process → Output

2. Triggers & Inputs

What starts your workflow:

- Schedule / Timer (cron)
- Webhook URL
- Form submission
- Incoming email
- Manual click

3. Nodes

Blocks that perform actions:

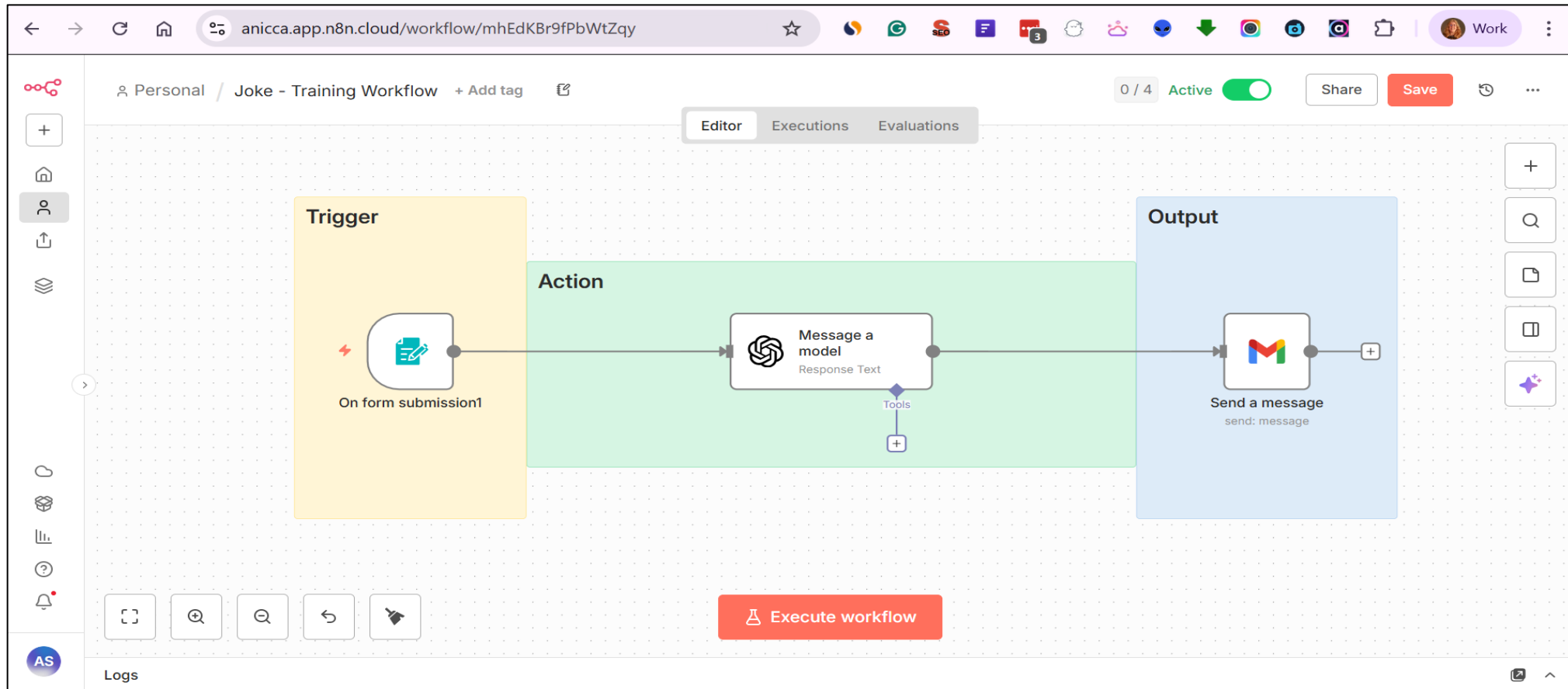
- Trigger nodes (start the flow)
- Logic nodes (IF, Switch, Merge)
- AI nodes (GPT, Claude)
- Action nodes (Gmail, Sheets)

4. Data Passing (JSON)

Nodes pass JSON to each other.
Field mapping = 50% of n8n mastery.
{ "name": "Ann",
"topic": "marketing" }

We are building a Joke machine

The Joke Machine — a complete AI agent in 3 nodes. Form in, AI brain, joke emailed to you.



1. On Form Submission

n8n generates a web form.
User fills in name, email & topic.

2. AI Agent using OpenAI (API)

Takes the topic, prompts Claude to write a joke.
Dynamic fields.

3. Gmail: Send a Message

Sends the joke to the email from the form.

The Joke Machine — Step by Step

LIVE BUILD

1. Submit a form

Name: Ann Stanley
Email: ann@anicca.co.uk
Topic: digital marketing

[Submit]

2. AI Agent using OpenAI (API)

OpenAI Chat Model

"Tell a joke about
\${{ form.topic }}
for \${{ form.name }}"

3. Gmail: Send a Message

To: ann@anicca.co.uk
Subject: Your Joke!

Why did the marketer
break up
with the calendar?
Because they had too
many dates
and none of them
converted!

The Christmas Cracker Model: Content & Marketing Engine(s)

INPUTS

Multi-Source Data

Input Sources

Brand Guidelines

Customer Data

Product Information

Campaign Parameters

Competitive Intelligence

Performance Data

Content Assets

Market Trends

Seasonal Data

API Feeds

Content Ideas

Drive Sheet Controller

CONTENT ENGINE

Marketing Content AI –
Powered by n8n + LLM

Content Engine Functions

AI Content Generation

Brand Voice Consistency

Multi-Channel Formatting

Audience Segmentation

Personalisation Engine

Content Optimisation

Quality Control Gates

A/B Testing Setup

SEO Optimisation

Campaign Orchestration

OUTPUTS

Multi-Channel Content

Output & Content Created

Email Campaigns

Social Media

Blog Articles

Video Scripts

Podcast Content

Website Copy

Ad Copy

Sales Materials

Press Releases

Newsletters

Case Studies

White Papers

Optional Website Upload

Your Next Steps

You don't need to be a developer or a coder to build automations and AI Agents.

I am not a developer — and I've built loads of automations.

1: Sign up to n8n

n8n Cloud free tier.
Zero setup, but limited to 2 live workflows.

2: Learn the basics

Forms, agents, IF, Gmail, Sheets.
Import pre-existing templates
Watch our training videos

3: Add the AI & APIs

Get API keys (tokens) for AI & other platforms
Drop in AI Agent nodes.
Same Joke Machine pattern.
Connect other platforms via APIs
Use pre-formatted nodes
Upgrade to free local hosted account, with added community nodes

4: Use Claude Code

Initially a complex set-up and steep learning curve (often puts off non-techies).
With relevant skills and practice you can build or do anything, reports, analysis, apps, full website, full automations

The Claude Ecosystem

SIMPLE / PREDICTABLE

AUTONOMOUS

1. Claude Chat

Use Claude instead of ChatGPT. Better writing, reasoning & analysis.

2. Claude Projects

Persistent workspace. Upload files, instructions. History retained.

Per-client with brand guidelines & assets. RAG knowledge base.

3. Projects + Skills

Reproducible tasks. Connect Gmail, Drive, Sheets via integrations (Login or API Token)

4. Claude Cowork

Access files on your laptop. Carries out tasks, e.g. Searches web, fetch data, create files. Non-technical interface with Skills and many Claude Code features

5. Claude Code

Runs in terminal (CLI) or use inside VS Code or Cursor IDE (Integrated Development Environment). Technical to set-up but easy to use to do anything!

6. OpenClaw

Fully autonomous. Browses, clicks, fills forms. Can build complete Apps in days.

Security concerns

Getting started with Claude code –



AI AGENTS | GEO / AI

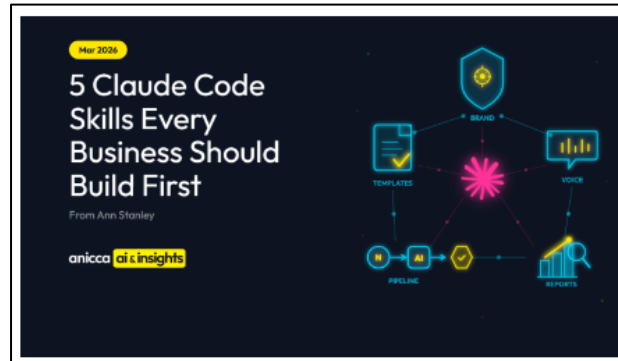
[From Claude Projects to Claude Code: A Beginner's Guide](#)

By Ann Stanley • 9 February 2026

Contents Introduction If you've heard of ChatGPT, you've probably also heard of Claude – Anthropic's AI assistant. But Claude does things differently, and those differences matter if you're serious about using AI in your business. This guide walks you through the journey from using Claude Projects on the web to working with Claude Code on...

[READ MORE →](#)

[Getting started with Claude Code](#)



- TIPS, HINTS & GUIDES - | AI AGENTS | GEO / AI

[5 Claude Code Skills Every Business Should Build First](#)

By Ann Stanley • 2 March 2026

Five practical Claude Code skills every business should build first: brand bible, document templates, brand voice, content pipeline, and automated reports. A step-by-step guide from someone who's built 80+ skills at a digital marketing agency.

[READ MORE →](#)

[Five essential Claude skills](#)



- ANICCA NEWS & EVENTS - | AI AGENTS | GEO / AI

[The Marketer's Guide to OpenClaw \(previously Moltbot & Clawdbot\): From Hype to High-Performance AI Agent](#)

By Ann Stanley • 1 February 2026

Estimated reading time: 9 minutes Table of Contents The Backstory: Three Names in One Week What Can It Actually Do? Real Use Cases How Does It Connect to Everything? Understanding MCP Technical Terms Explained Simply Setup Options: Mac vs PC vs Cloud The Security Warnings: Read This Carefully OpenClaw vs "AI Employees" (Sintra, Manus, etc.)...

[READ MORE →](#)

[Marketer's Guide to OpenClaw](#)

Claude Code for the C-Suite

Why Agentic AI Will Revolutionise Your Marketing and Operations

A practical guide for business leaders who've heard about agentic AI
but aren't sure what it means for their organisation

By Ann Stanley • Founder & CTO, Anicca Digital • Co-Director & CMO, Anicca AI & Insights • March 2026





The Thursday AI Club

Fortnightly Drop-in Sessions & Training for Marketers & Managers Building with AI

Sign up at secret-agents.ai/thursday-ai-club

Benefits of the club

Fortnightly drop-in AMA
Optional 2-hour workshops
Weekly newsletter
Quarterly hackathon
Community & resource archive

Secret-Agents.ai

Free access to our
AI agent marketplace
included with membership

Membership Fees

£50 per month
or £500 per year



Getting in touch

Ann Stanley (CTO)

ann@anicca.co.uk

07930 384443

07455 750333 (AI Receptionist)