

Delivering YouTube Captioning for TV Broadcasters

Closed captioning products MacCaption and CaptionMaker allow you to easily author, edit, encode and repurpose video captions for television, web and mobile delivery. Utilizing exclusive e-Captioning™ technology, MacCaption (for Mac) and CaptionMaker (for Windows) simplify the process of complying with FCC regulatory requirements, enabling greater access to broadcast content for television, online and mobile viewers.

Introduction

As one of the most popular websites in the world, YouTube has added many features for accessibility to its users. The support for closed captioning (CC) is one feature that many online video content producers are taking advantage of.

The key for TV broadcasters is to preserve the positioning and formatting of TV closed caption data when broadcasting on YouTube. We will discuss below which formats work best for proper Internet closed captioning as well as the features which YouTube provides to users.

CC File Formats supported by YouTube

Originally, YouTube supported basic closed caption file formats such as .SRT. These files were very simple and only supported timing and line breaks. Today, YouTube supports a variety of CC file formats that have advanced positioning features. For example, a popular TV closed caption file that is widely used is the .SCC file. A YouTube user can simply upload a .SCC file alongside a video file and YouTube will preserve all the caption positioning that was used in the TV broadcast.

Other file formats that YouTube accepts include WebVTT, DFXP, SAMI, and STL EBU.

The Importance of TV Closed Caption Text Formatting

For pre-recorded shows on TV, the position of the CC text on the screen is very important to viewers. For example, when there are two people talking at the same time, caption text will be split into 2 lines. One line of text for the first speaker can be seen on the left and another line of text for the speaker on the right side of the screen. Similarly, there could be a graphic or speaker identification that should not be blocked by caption text. Also, making the text italicized has significance. Italicized text means that the speaker is off screen.

If there is no positioning or formatting of the caption text, then the YouTube closed captions do not have the same level of accessibility as the original TV broadcast closed captions. Therefore, it's important to use closed captioning software that can accurately preserve the formatting and positioning of the original TV broadcast.

Auto Translation of Captions

A great feature that YouTube users can take advantage of is the Auto Translation feature of the YouTube captioning mechanism. When uploading a caption file such as .SCC to YouTube, the viewer can click the CC button and reveal a translation button that is user selectable. This means that people who do not understand English can see an automatic translation of the captioned text in their native language.

Auto translation is not perfect. Whenever possible a manually translated time-coded script should be uploaded to the YouTube video to provide the best accuracy possible. Multiple caption files in different languages can be associated with the same video. Many YouTube channels, which have an international audience, may have up to 10 languages of captions that viewers can select from.

Automatic Captioning

Many times we are asked about the auto captioning feature of YouTube. Oftentimes, a user uploads a video without captions only to find that the auto captioning is not very accurate in transcribing the audio. The auto captioning feature provides a level of accessibility when nothing else is available. However, it is not a substitute for professionally authored caption files that can be uploaded to YouTube.

iPhone Video CC with YouTube App

YouTube has released a new app that can be downloaded for free on the iPhone and iPad.

This new app allows iOS viewers to take advantage of the caption files present in videos uploaded to YouTube. In the past, the iOS YouTube app did not allow captions to be viewed on the iPhone. This opens up a huge audience for videos with closed captions for TV broadcasters who want to deliver their TV content over YouTube with closed captions.

YouTube Captioning is a Great Choice

In combination with the proper closed captioning desktop software, TV broadcasters can successfully utilize the YouTube captioning technology to deliver accessible media to everyone in the world. Not only will this expand the current audience of the video, but also increase its search engine optimization.

