



# 10 Video SEO Tips That Can Truly Impact Your Rankings

[Evy Wilkins](#), May 7, 2014 [1 Comment](#)

Recently, Purna Virji wrote a [refreshing piece](#) on the right way to think about [SEO](#). In short, forget the silver bullets and focus on quality.

Extending her approach, let's focus in on video SEO and talk about how you can truly make an impact on your ranking.

Many of the points articulated below have come from speaking with several marketers over the last few weeks who have been working at the intersection of video marketing and SEO for awhile. What impressed me most was that, like Virji, these folks were incredibly down-to-earth about video SEO, providing very clear best practices and ideas for taking a long-term, quality-driven approach to video SEO.

Let these 10 points be a checklist for you as you plan or review your video SEO strategy.

## Always Be Providing Value

There's no point to being found if you don't provide a fabulous experience when your audience arrives. The first few points on the video SEO checklist are about proving your worth to your viewers, not the robots.

### 1. Use Video to Solve Problems & Provide New Information

To get your videos to rank well for your search terms, you need to provide great content that actually solves problems or provides new information. The good news is that great content usually isn't difficult or expensive to produce.

This can be as simple as filming a whiteboarding session or getting one of your subject matter experts to sit down for a short interview. Ask yourself: what problems or obstacles does my audience faces regularly? How can I show someone how to accomplish their goal faster/better/cheaper?

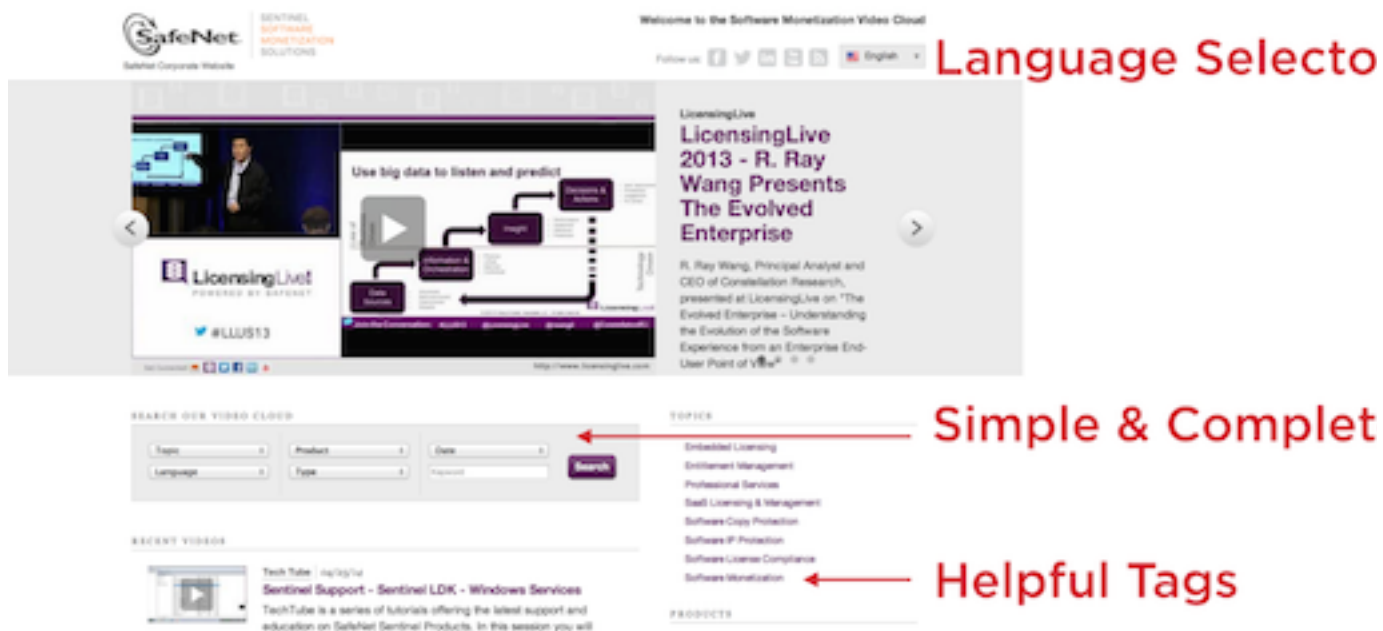
### 2. Make Videos Easy to Browse & Link to Individual Video Playback Pages

Group together your video assets and create [a user-friendly video resource center](#) where your viewers can easily search your content.

Set up your video portal or gallery with categories and tags so it's easy to find exactly what you're looking for and navigate between videos seamlessly.

Avoid the endless stream of video players on a single page. If you've ever come across a wall of embedded YouTube videos on someone's site, you'll understand just how difficult it is to find what you want.

Instead, make sure you have a separate landing page for each video so search engines can find and index each video asset individually. You've invested in your video content, so don't let a poor video experience take away from that.



### 3. Use Interactive Video Elements to Connect With Viewers

For every video someone watches, there is an opportunity to call that person to action or guide them to the next logical step.

Interactive video elements like in-video links, quizzes, surveys, and forms enable you to intercept your viewers at key moments and drive action.

For example, if you create a how-to video for your app, use in-video interactivity to link your viewer directly to the point in your app where they can accomplish what they just learned.

## Nail the Nuts & Bolts

The funny thing about best practices is that they tend to last a long time! Stick to the basics and embrace common sense when it comes to the technical side of video SEO.

## **4. Be Smart & Relevant About Metadata**

I moderated a video SEO webinar last month where Jennifer Lewis, the senior interactive marketing manager at SafeNet, talked about how she uses rich metadata and smart content organization to get the most from their video resource library. For SafeNet, video is a way to go after valuable long tail keywords that they would not otherwise be able to grab.

Also be sure to populate hidden tags in the HTML code of your video landing pages, specifically Facebook's OpenGraph tags, Schema.org's microdata tags, and even sometimes Twitter Card tags.

## **5. Use Transcriptions for Indexing, Usability & Content**

Transcriptions can have a major impact on your search rankings. In the same webinar, Lewis presented the results of a quick test we did with some of SafeNet's videos. The goal was to see if a transcript could take a video that was not ranking and get it ranked. The answer was yes.

In just three weeks, the selected videos were ranking on the first page (Bing and Yahoo). We're continuing to watch how these video perform.

To unlock the content in your videos, add video transcriptions directly to the HTML of each of the pages where your videos are hosted. Transcriptions give your viewers the option to "read" a video if they can't listen at the time, while providing the keyword richness a search engine needs.

Transcriptions are also very useful in creating additional content from your videos. For example, you can use a transcript as the base for a blog post that links back to your video resource site.

## **6. Host Your Videos on Your Own Domain**

If there is one single thing you do to get more SEO value from your videos it's to host them on your own domain. YouTube and Vimeo have their place (we'll get to that below), but you must host your videos on your own site.

You want to use an online video platform that will build out a video sitemap on a subdomain on your own site. If you're using YouTube or another video player to embed video on your site, you're simply giving away all the credit for your content.

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## 7. Make Sure You Have a Video Sitemap

To really nail the nuts and bolts of video SEO, you need to have the basics covered with a properly configured video sitemap.

Every entry in your video sitemap must include a link to a landing page for a video, hence the value of the video resource site or video gallery.

Metadata is optional but recommended.

Look for an online video platform that automates the video sitemap for you so you don't have to worry about it on an ongoing basis.

## Be a Smart Social Butterfly

Like content, UX, and infrastructure, social has its place in video SEO. These last two points are about getting the most out of social, while creating many paths back to your own site.

## 8. Use YouTube to Preview High-Value Content, Drive Traffic Back to Your Own Site

YouTube is a great place to get your content discovered by new people. It's an awareness channel that should be part of your marketing mix; however, you should approach YouTube like a mandatory layover. It's a quick stop on the route to your final destination – your own video gallery hosted on your own domain.

A great way to leverage YouTube for all its awareness value, while contributing to your own video SEO, is to create shorter video previews for your content and use YouTube's annotations to place in-video CTA that drive viewers back to your site's own video resource library, hosted on your own domain.

Consider your preview to be a different piece of content. Use a different title and summary and perhaps even swap out the thumbnail.

From a viewer's perspective, what do they need to see to be motivated to click through? This avoids the duplicate content problem, while creating a good user experience.

## **9. Allow Others to Embed Your Videos**

As you create great videos, [let others incorporate your content](#) into their work. By making it easy for others to embed your videos on their site, you're increasing the potential for more inbound links to your own website – clearly an SEO win.

## **10. Measure How Keywords Impact the Bottom Line**

Last but not least, always start with the end in mind. As you plan out your video SEO strategy, don't forget to implement a tracking system to capture the success of your new strategy.

Sometimes tracking is built into your video platform or analytics software, sometimes this is custom code that engineering or IT will build, but it should always report on the number of people that come through the top of the funnel through social or search, and track those contacts through your content strategy to closure.

That brings us to the end of my 10-point checklist for a real video SEO strategy. Would you add anything to list? What has worked for you in the past?