

Welcome

Before we get started

- Today's webinar is scheduled to last 1 hour including Q&A
- Click the CC button for Closed Captions
- BSL interpretation is available
- This webinar is being recorded and will be available on the website alongside additional resources within 7 days
- Say hello in the chat (select "Everyone" from the dropdown) and ask questions using the Q+A button. You can also use the reaction buttons! 🤔 🎉 😊

>> StageTEXT

Everything you ever wanted to know about subtitling*

*but were afraid to ask

Oliver Webster, Thursday 16th May 2024



**Digital Culture
Network**



Contents

- Digital Subtitling: Tips & Best Practice
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Q&A

Who is this for?

Those responsible for:

- Creating/adding subtitles to video content
- Booking professional subtitles
- Reviewing subtitle quality

And the curious!

Digital Subtitling: Tips & Best Practice

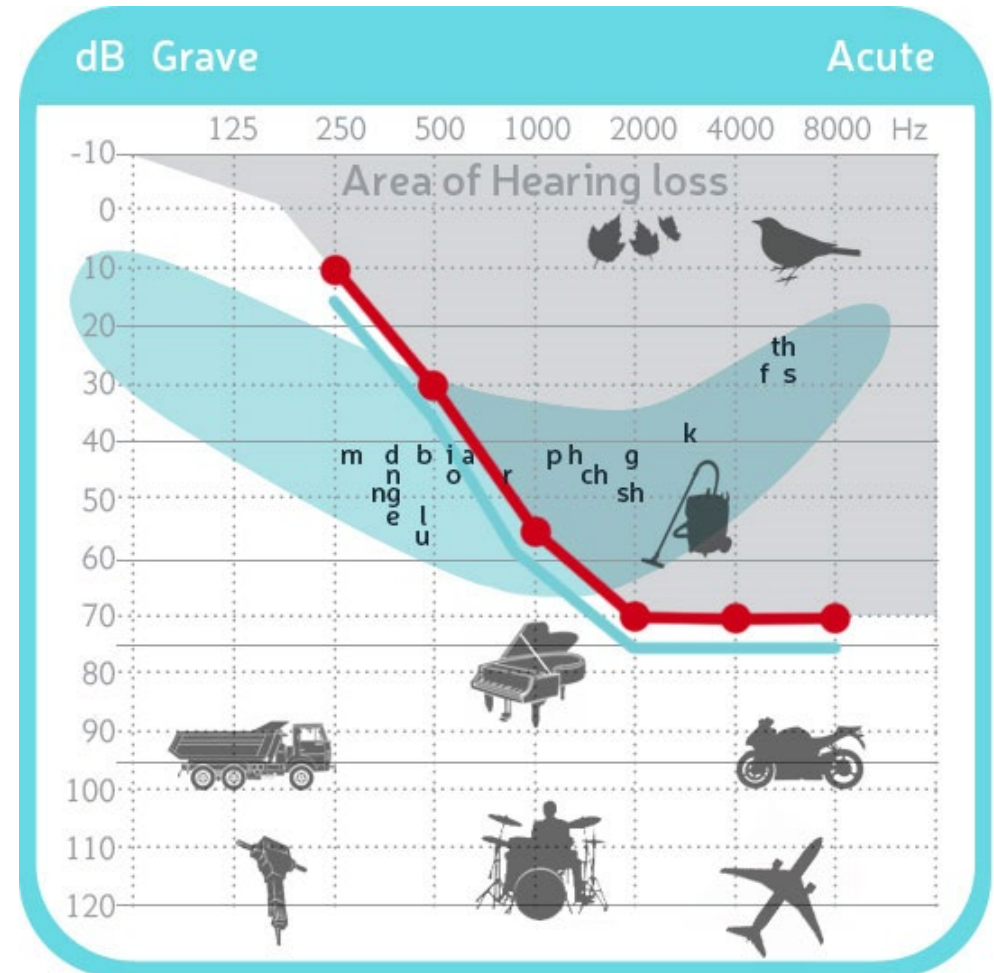
How do subtitles work?

- X Axis: Frequency (pitch)
- Y Axis – Volume (loudness)
- Blue blob – area of human speech
- Red and blue lines – threshold of hearing (for this person)
- Grey area – area of hearing loss

For most deaf people

- NOT that everything is just quieter
- IS that parts of words are quieter than other
- Possibly even that parts of words are missing

Subtitles: fill in these gaps!



Subtitle Safe Zone

- Keep this area clear
- 20% or 1/5th of the screen
- Bottom of the screen
- Consistent location



Subtitle Safe Zone



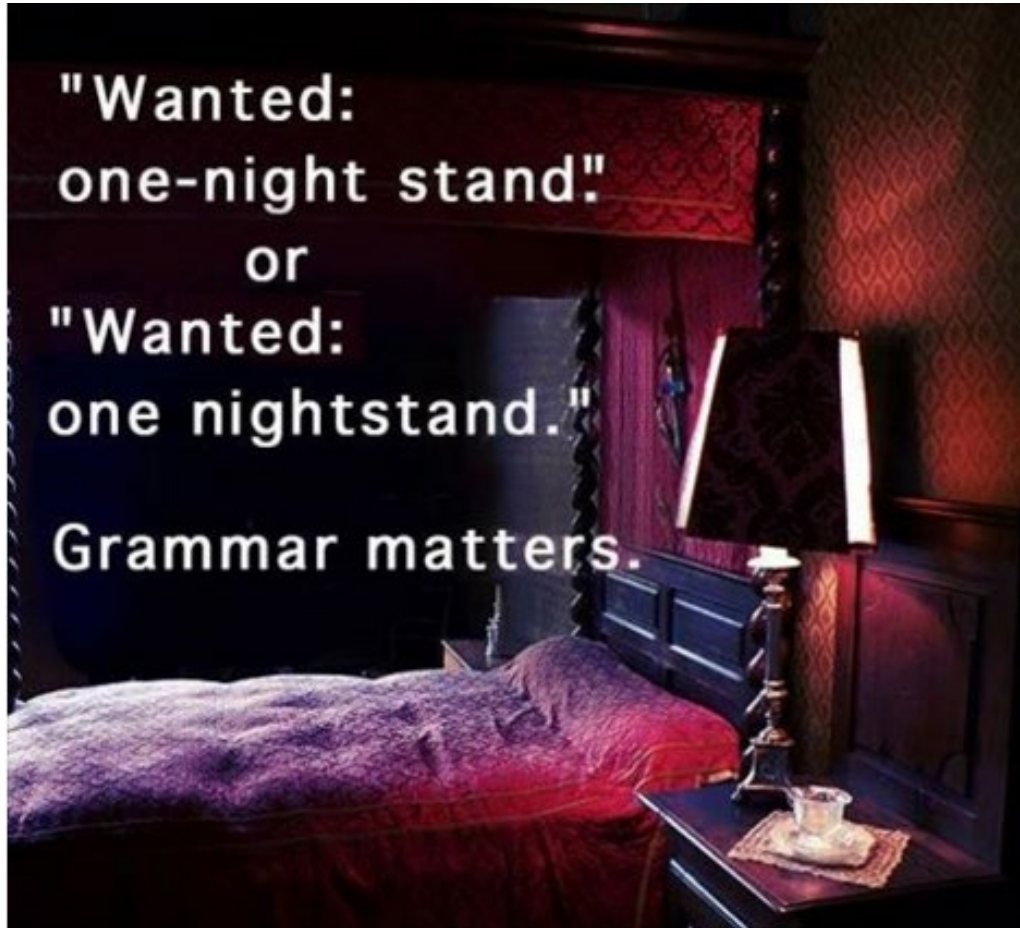
Francis Christeller

[Marketing and Development]
Assistant, LIFT

Adam came into the office in February
this year to give us the training.

Grammar

"Wanted:
one-night stand"
or
"Wanted:
one nightstand."
Grammar matters.



Punctuation

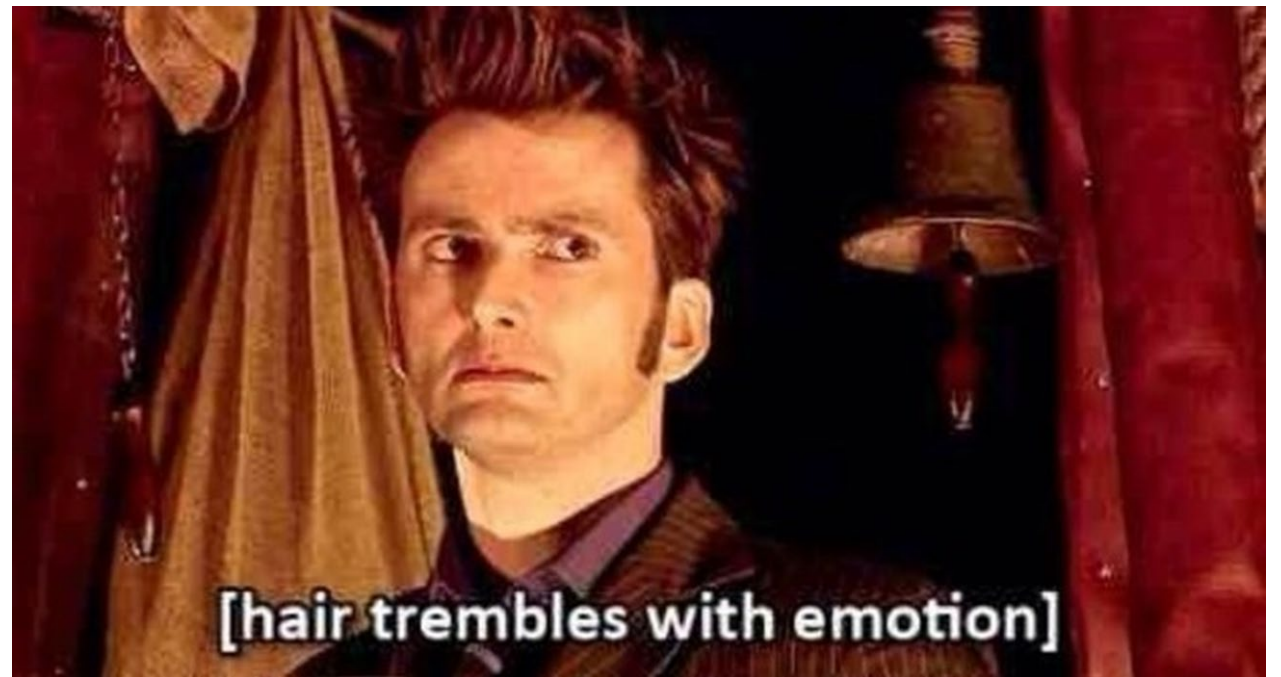


References

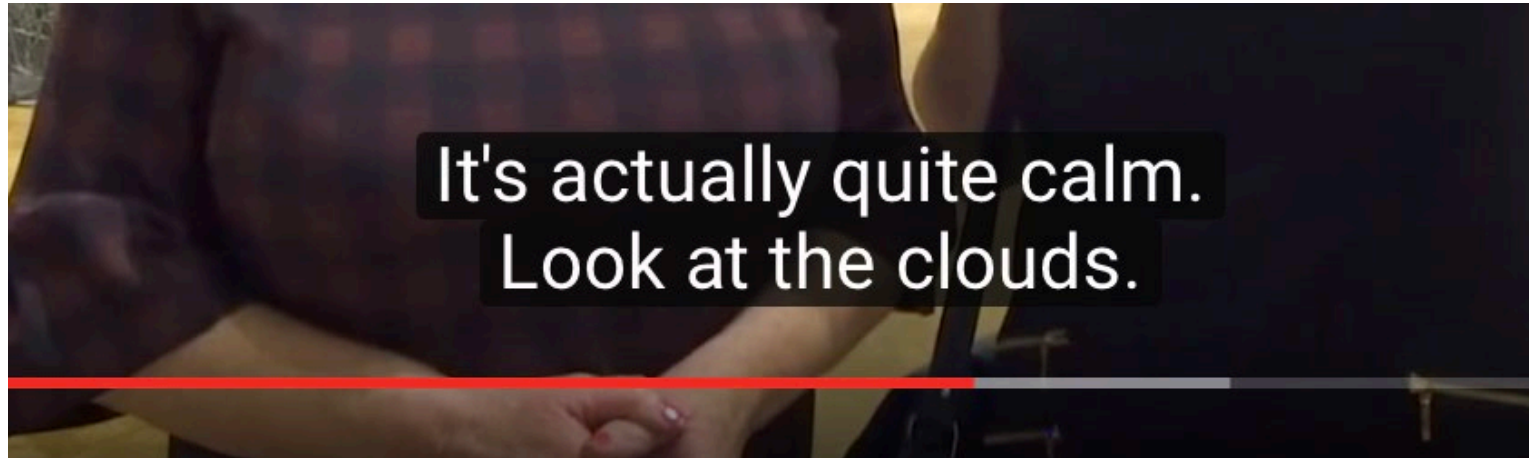
- Copy of the text
- Dialogue list
- Glossary of atypical words
- Special references
- Other languages
- E.g. script, speaker and place names, specialist vocabulary, sound effects

References

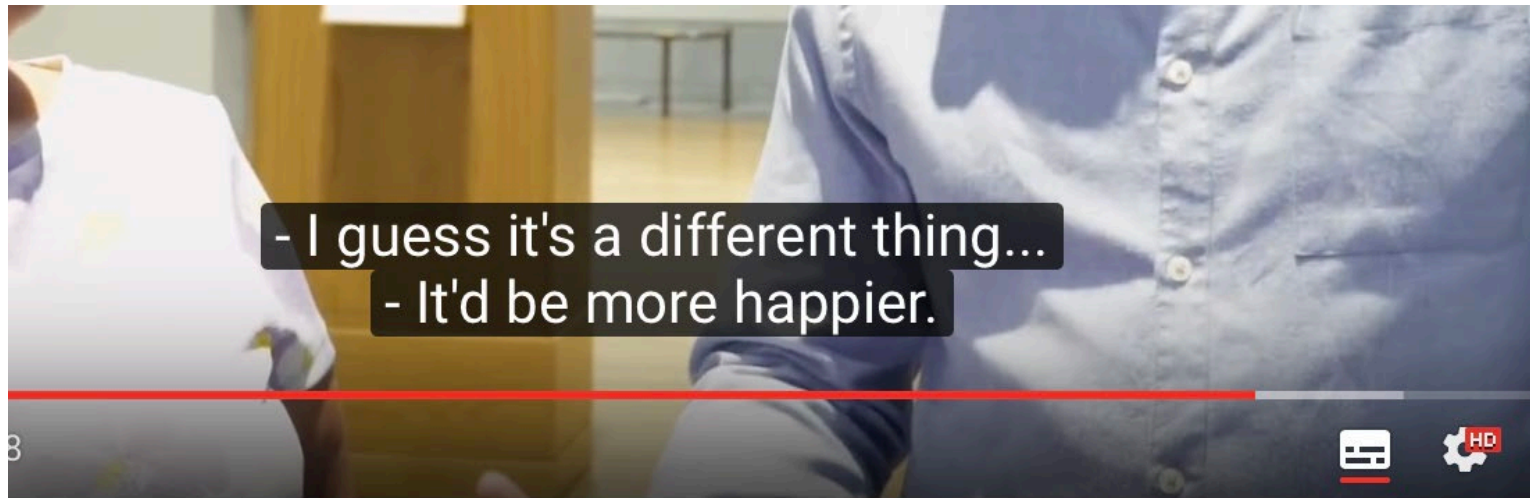
- Also include artists, titles and lyrics for music
- Verbatim subtitles
- As factual as possible



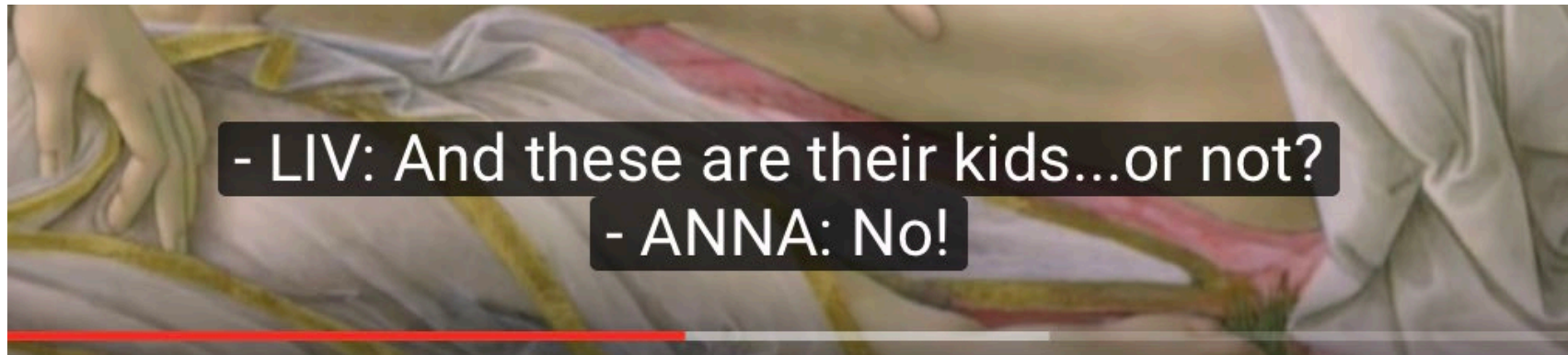
Line Breaks & Short Sentences



When Two People Are Speaking



Off Screen Speaking



Sound Effects



Music



🎵 Beginning And End Of Song 🎵

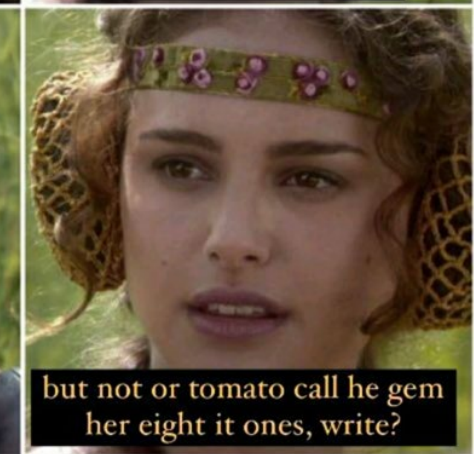
🎵 Just calm the child

- 🎵 Nothing's quite so clear now
- 🎵 Do things, fight things

🎵 I'm so happy! 🎵

Should you use AI subtitles?

- AI has taken off in recent years
- Is it 100% accurate?
- Does it include access elements?



Top Tips For DIY

- Verbatim subtitles
- Consistency
- Plan ahead!
- Grammar
- Punctuation
- Subtitle Safe Zone
- Maximum of two lines
- Use dashes to show two people speaking onscreen
- Use names when indicating people off-screen
- Don't have sound effects for evident sounds
- Subtitle off-screen sounds
- Music – [SONG – ARTIST]
- Unless you're subtitling the lyrics, in which case use ♪
- Use ♪ like quotation marks

>> StageTEXT
Every word counts

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Digital Subtitling Guidelines

- Stagertext advocates equal access for deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people through captions and subtitles. We never edit or alter the visual soundtrack from the spoken word. Our captions and subtitles are based on studies and surveys of users with a range of hearing loss; the best practice of digital subtitling is detailed below.
- Subtitling is the means of creating a visual soundtrack; descriptions should be fact based and remain in the world of the play/video.
- The text should always be verbatim, styled as the person speaks, and where possible each caption syntactically self-contained. - Once you've finished subtitling your video, watch the whole video on mute. Are you getting equal access?

Key	Definition	Example
References	Work with the copy of the text if possible, or dialogue list and glossary of atypical words and special references.	Script, speaker and place names, specialist vocabulary, sound effects.
Subtitle line length	Average subtitle length is 42 characters. No more than 2 lines per subtitle. If possible the bottom line should be longer so as to not interfere with the image. When necessary to edit dialogue to fit on screen within a set time, text must be coherent.	- Remove unnecessary words such as: really, just, perhaps, that, quite, who, was, which
Translate the whole idea	Each subtitle should be syntactically self-contained. Keep pronouns and verbs together.	
Minimum duration	Names, off-screen interjections etc. should also be subtitled. Subtitles should be visible for at least 1 second.	
Maximum timing offset	Subtitles follow the rhythm of speech, matching the soundtrack. This helps people who lipread. Subtitles shouldn't start more than 0.5 seconds before or after the audio begins.	
Maximum duration	Split subtitles lasting more than 7 seconds. Subtitles are more easily read if they stay within the shot.	
Sounds	Describe meaningful sounds that are relevant to the plot/subject. Sound effects are notated in all CAPS inside square brackets, in the present tense, inside the world of the play / video.	[DOOR BELL RINGS]
	Onomatopoeia	grrrrrrrrrr
	SFX description	[AUDIENCE LAUGHTER]
	SFX description & Onomatopoeia	[ICE BUZZZS] RZZZZZZZZZZ
Music	Audience noise should be specified, with round brackets. Describe relevant music which does not have lyrics, in capital letters with a musical note (♫) or octothorpe (⌘). Where the name and artist are known include both, title of the piece followed by author or performer.	[♫ BLUES HARMONICA ♫] OR [⌘ BLUES HARMONICA ⌘] [♫ FIFTH SYMPHONY - BEETHOVEN ♫]
Lyrics	Wrap relevant lyrics in musical notes. The musical notes (♫) identify when the singing starts and ends.	♪ Somewhere over the rainbow Way up high ♫
Speech	Emphasis, avoid capital letters, use italics. Vocal effect description should be factual rather than interpretive. In all caps inside brackets.	- I will not leave! [WHISPER] OR [SHOUTS]

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between closed captions and open captions?

Open Captions

- Always on display
- 'Open' to the whole audience
- Only one language
- Equal experience to all

Closed Captions

- Turned on by the viewer
- 'Closed' to the user
- Multiple files
- Extra steps required

Frequently Asked Questions

What about subtitles? Are they different from closed captions?

- Not really!
- Different language for the same thing
- All closed captions are subtitles
- But subtitles can be closed captions or open captions

Frequently Asked Questions

**Why do I see double subtitling on videos sometimes?
it's really confusing!**

Frequently Asked Questions

What is more accessible – open captions or closed captions?

Frequently Asked Questions

Is there best practice for font size, style, and colour of subtitles and can I control this?

- Size: bottom 20% of screen
- Style: Arial or Tiresias
- Colour: Plain white text on black background

Key factor: LEGIBILITY

Frequently Asked Questions

What software can I use to add subtitles to a video?

Affordable/Free

- YouTube
- Subtitle Edit
- CapCut

Professional

- EZ Titles
- Wincaps
- Quantum

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I add subtitles for live training and webinars?

- Live Subtitles
- Specially trained Speech-To-Text-Reporters (STTRs)
- Up to 300 words per minute at 98% accuracy
- Each booking is bespoke
- Cost for a one-hour webinar: £200+VAT

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between automated and real-time subtitles (live subtitles)?

Live Subtitles

- Speaker names
- Accents
- Prep material
- Handles noise better

Quality and accuracy

Auto Subtitles

- Easier to implement
- Can be turned on any time
- No prep needed
- More affordable

Convenient and affordable

Frequently Asked Questions

Can live captions be saved and accessed later?

- Depends on the platform!
- Ask in advance

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the process to ensure that the subtitles meet accessibility standards?

- Sound Labels
- Speaker Names
- Verbatim

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I deal with multiple languages or dialects?

- 😊 • Verbatim – in the language & alphabet used
- ↑
- Collaborate with speaker to transcribe
- Collaborate with expert or native speaker to transcribe
- ↓
- ☹️ • Use a sound label – [SPEAKING IN _____]

Frequently Asked Questions

How are cultural references, idioms, or jargon best handled in subtitles?

Frequently Asked Questions

How are special effects or non-verbal sounds represented in the subtitles?

- [WOOSH]
- (engine roaring)
- [sound from tap dripping] ❌ – [TAP DRIPPING] ✔️
- Avoid
 - ‘Sounds’ – [WINDY SOUNDS]
 - ‘Music’ – [UPBEAT MUSIC]
 - ‘Noise’ – [SCUFFLING NOISE]

Frequently Asked Questions

Can anyone subtitle videos?

- Technically yes
- **but** – will the subtitles be accessible?
- and how long will they take to create?
- How long will they take to review?

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the cost associated with subtitling services?

It depends!

Example figures from Stagertext's subtitling service:

- 10-minute video - £60 to £75
- 30-minute video - £120 to £150
- 2-hour video - £480 to £600
- (all prices exclude VAT)

Q&A

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**Digital Culture
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