

Why Captioning Videos, Webinars, and Meetings Benefits Everyone in the Workplace!

Today, it's very common for content to include closed captions.

Closed captions are the lines of text you see on the bottom of your screen if you are watching a video or a screen and you click the [CC] button. They are a written version of what is being said in the video, and sometimes other sounds and actions happening in the video.

For some time, captions were used only for people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing to access video content, but they have become a lot more than that in our extremely-online world. In addition to improving accessibility, captions boost engagement, flexibility and user satisfaction.

Captions are also excellent for promoting inclusion and engagement in the workplace. They break down barriers for everyone. Meetings, conference calls, company videos and training can easily be made more accessible and more successful with captions.

HOW CAPTIONS PROVIDE ACCESS FOR EVERYONE

Closed captions serve those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing by giving them a written alternative to the spoken word, which displays in real time so the viewer can follow along.

You likely know and work with someone who is deaf or hard-of-hearing. [The Canadian Hearing Association reports](#) one out of ten Canadians - 4 million people - have hearing loss.

Captions also support many others who need a little more support with audiovisual content. For those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), auditory processing can be challenging. Closed captions also assist with this, bringing ease of understanding and focus.

Live captioning can help support people with dyslexia when the caption is available in [OpenDyslexic font](#). This font is specifically-designed to make text legible to those with dyslexia.

For those for whom English is a second language, closed captions enhance understanding by offering a written version of the words being spoken.

For those now working at home, closed captions help workers who may be managing background noise at home.

And for everyone else, captions have still been found to increase attention to detail, engagement with content, and information retention.

The [BBC](#) conducted an in-depth survey of people 18 years and older, and found that:

- 80% of people who used closed captions had no hearing loss.
- 80% of people who used closed captions were not hearing impaired.
- 70% of respondents said closed captions improved comprehension.

CLOSED CAPTIONS AT WORK

There are numerous applications for captioning at work.

1. MEETINGS

Everyone in an organization should feel like their participation is both possible and valued, and meetings are an important part of this. Meetings can be intense and fast-paced, and captions are a critical key to ensuring all colleagues, including your deaf and hard-of-hearing colleagues, can fully participate.

Live captions for meetings should be displayed to the group either via a shared screen or projector, or alternatively to the individual on devices such as smartphones, laptops and tablets. This also means you can have a transcript of the meeting at the end. All major videoconferencing platforms now support captions from leading captioning companies.

2. EVENTS

There's a lot of work that goes in to planning a conference or seminar. You want to make sure that all attendees feel satisfied and supported. One important element to create this environment is accessibility, including closed captioning. [Captioning at events](#) is usually displayed on screen to the entire audience.

As well as improving accessibility, this adds value for all attending guests. It improves engagement and attention, and gives attendees a second chance to catch up on dialogue.

3. WEBINARS

[Webinars](#) may be internal employee-only broadcasts or larger scale events that include customers, prospects, key stakeholders, and others. You can enable closed captions that appear on the screen with the presenter, or in a text box to

the side of the speaker. For these events, it's valuable to ensure you get the transcript, as you or your attendees may need it later.

4. **ONLINE VIDEOS**

Your online videos—on the internet, your organization's intranet, social media and webinars—experience more success when they include closed captions or live captions.

You can [add captions to Facebook videos](#) and [YouTube](#) for free through their portals. Just be aware that these automated captions aren't completely accurate and should be manually checked before publishing. When it matters, approach a professional service to ensure accuracy.

THE MANY OTHER BENEFITS OF CAPTIONING

1. **TRANSCRIPTS**

Captions can easily be turned into a transcript for the user to keep and refer back to. In fact, this is generally done as part of every professional captioning service. Transcripts are a valuable record for meeting minutes, handy notes and can present opportunities for content creation in other formats later on.

2. **BETTER SEO**

Adding captions to your videos will improve Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). Your videos will be more searchable on search engines like Google, Bing and Yahoo. A search engine can't watch or listen to a video, but it can index text when a transcript is available. This means that captioned videos will rank higher in searches, leading to more views and exposure for your content. Captions also mean you'll have a written version of your video. You can then use that to repurpose the video into other content like a blog article or mail-out.

3. **A MORE ENGAGING USER EXPERIENCE**

Flexibility is both essential and expected in our busy lives. If members of your meeting are on the move, multitasking, or in a noisy place where they can't hear your audio, captions are important to keep them looped into the conversation. Similarly, if some of your attendees are in a quiet place and can't turn their sound on, live captions will keep them engaged.

This article was composed by Allison Harris for [Ai-Media](#). Ai-Media is a global captioning, transcription and translation company that supports the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community, and is part of Presidents Group's Community of Accessible Employers.

