



NEWSOURCE

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SEO FOR VIDEO: FIVE WAYS TO MAKE YOUR VIDEOS EASIER TO FIND

The advent of blended search results, known as “universal search” in Google, has produced listings that now contain various types of media beyond traditional website, including images, videos, news, blogs and products. With blended search, engines can provide even more visually appealing and relevant results. Some of the most noticeable blended search results are videos. With proper optimization, any website can clearly communicate to search engines what a video is about and have it properly indexed. Once indexed, an optimized video can rank high within relevant searches and begin to drive more traffic to your digital sites.

So, how can you make your videos SEO friendly?





1. Develop a unique URL and physical page for each video.

This strategy allows the page to become a unique landing page, where all of the important SEO-related fields can be optimized for the video's relevant keywords. A single page per video also supports linking from social sites and blogs. Make sure to use descriptive keywords in the file name within the URL.

An example from CNN:

<http://www.cnn.com/videos/cnnmoney/2015/01/07/cnn-ces-airdog-drone.cnnmoney>



2. Optimize all SEO elements on each video's page so they're applicable to the video, including title tags, meta description, meta keyword tags, alt tags and header tags.

Remember, crawlers can only crawl metadata, not the video itself, so that data should be strong and descriptive. The page where the video is embedded should have keywords in its Title tag and Meta tags that describe the video's topic. Here are a few important tags for digital videos:



The **Title tag**, which is located in the Head section of a webpage, is one of the most important indicators to search engines of what a webpage is about. It also frequently shows up as the clickable link on search results pages. Video pages sometimes appear as web listings without a thumbnail, in which case the relevancy of the Title tag becomes even more important. Keep in mind that, although your Title can be longer, Google usually only shows 65-70 characters in the results. An example from CNN:

In the news



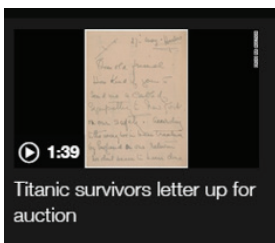
NYPD, other law enforcement on alert after ISIS threat resurfaces
CNN - 4 hours ago
(CNN) The New York City Police Department and other law enforcement personnel ... On Sunday, an update to an old ISIS video was released by an unidentified person or ...

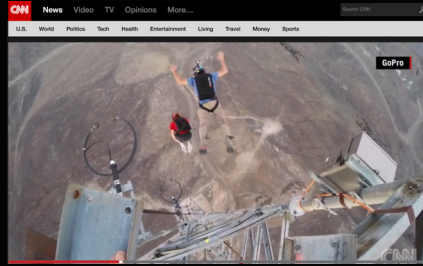
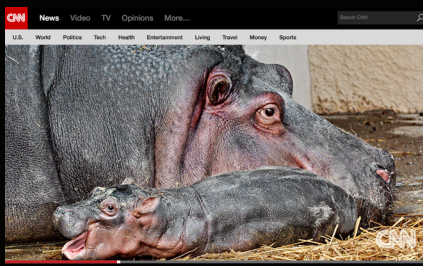
The **Meta Description tag** is the second most important tag, and also appears in the Head section. This tag should be similar to the Title tag, using the same keywords, but should elaborate a bit more, using one or two brief sentences, possibly introducing secondary keyword phrases. This tag also appears in some search results as the description, making it important for users as well as search engines. The overall length should be between 15-160 characters.

Placing **Body Copy** on the same page as the video helps the search engines understand a video's subject matter. Since spiders cannot "read" a video file, they rely on textual descriptions to ascertain what the video is about. Ideally, a brief article of at least 150-200 words will accompany the video on the page. This text may consist of captions, summaries, commentary, reviews or transcripts.

Link Anchor Text is the word or phrase used within the link to the video. This text tells the user (and the spider) what it can expect when following that video link. Ideally, this link text will include keywords about the video, in a brief phrase of no more than six words. A phrase describing what the video is about works best.

3. Develop spider-friendly video section pages.



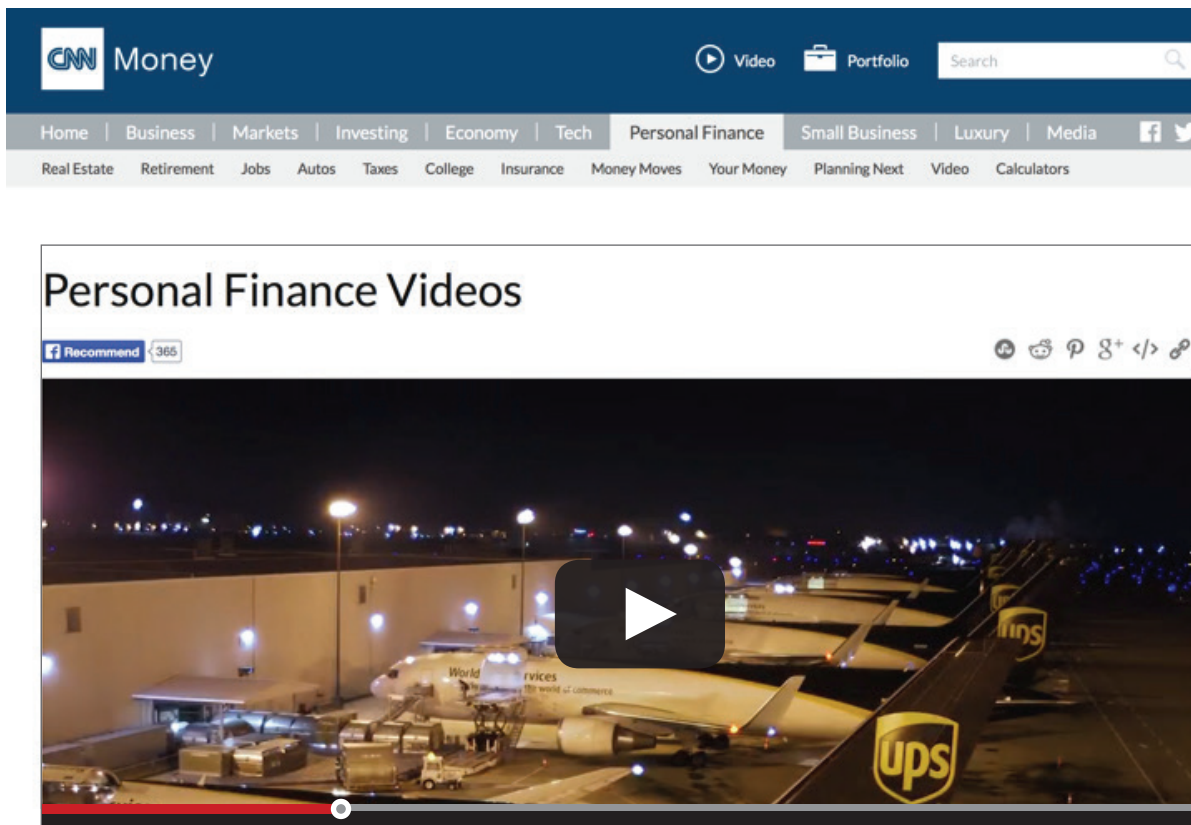


CNN NEWSOURCE

When creating sections on your digital sites, develop a single category page for each topic (such as Nation, Weather, Health, etc.) that will list all available videos in that section. As mentioned, the best option is to create a single page for each and every video, but they can and should also be incorporated into topical landing pages when appropriate. Each single video page would support the proper topical landing page as well as be able to rank on its own for the story in the video file itself. This approach allows for multiple entry points to the video section of the site through links from related pages. Grouping videos in this way and reinforcing the category with appropriate link anchor text may also strengthen your overall rankings in search engines.

An example category page from CNN Money:

4. Submit videos to search engines using optimized Media RSS feeds (mRSS) and/or XML Video Sitemaps.



Though Google and other engines do crawl web content, including videos, on their own, they have also provided a way for sites to communicate their content more proactively. Media RSS feeds (mRSS) and XML video sitemaps are two ways you can push your video data to the engines. These allow you to include keyword-rich tags that help the engines understand what your videos are about. While web search rankings are fueled heavily by content and linking, video search rankings are additionally ranked on click-through rates, video titles, meta descriptions and the categories assigned to the videos.



mRSS feeds allow you to send video data directly to the search engines, including enclosure tags for video content and thumbnail URLs. As an example, your mRSS feed could include an entry for each video, and each video could contain tags such as <media:title>, <media:description> and other optional tags.

Google has set up a protocol for submitting an XML video sitemap, similar to the standard XML sitemaps recommended for the rest of your web pages. Your video sitemap should contain a list of all videos embedded on your site. Like mRSS, your sitemap should contain video-specific tags such as title, description and other optional tags.

5. Make sure your video player is SEO friendly.

Ideally, your player would include the following features:

- Unique URL and physical page for each video
- Ability to optimize all SEO elements on each unique page so they are applicable for its video
- A single, category page for each topic that will list all available videos within that topic. Example structure: <http://money.cnn.com/pf/>
- Indexable text outside of the video player itself, where the appropriate tags are used (H1, H2, etc.)
- Option to add “more info”, which provides the ability to include as much unique text as possible for each video
- Any video widgets should be spider-friendly, and indexable
- Ensure video XML sitemap is regularly updated with all videos (preferably automatically on publish)
- Link to your Video XML Sitemap within your robots.txt file
- Ensure HTML sitemap links to all the new video topical pages
- Update your XML sitemap with the new URLs

Take your digital video strategy to the next level with the CNN Video Affiliate Network (VAN). The CNN VAN is a powerful digital syndication platform providing our partners with compelling, curated video content from CNN and 900+ trusted local news providers. With the VAN, you'll earn additional advertising revenue with the help of CNN's award-winning advertising sales team.



body copy

link anchor text

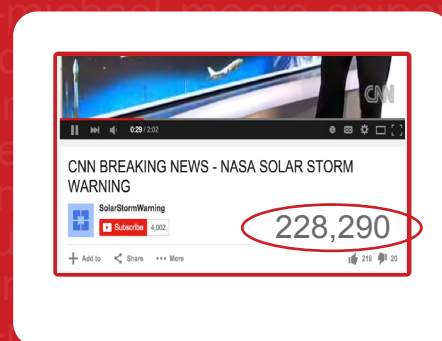


spider friendly

optimized media
RSS Feeds



SEO friendly





**To learn more about the VAN, contact
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