**GUIDELINES FOR VIDEO SUBTITLING**

There are many different rules for captioning, subtitling and transcription.

This is the ones we use at Captiz, for video transcription in the form of subtitles, called video captioning.

All these guidelines are compatible with the Captiz online editor.

At times, content shown in example is written in green (= correct format) or red (=incorrect format)

**TRANSLATION IN THE FORM OF SUBTITLES**

**What is a subtitle?**

A **subtitle** is a **printed** translation or adaptation of the **audio** in a video media.

Subtitles are **synchronized** to the video thanks to **timecodes**.

The **TC In** (or timecode in) indicates the beginning of the subtitle, and **TC Out** (Timecode out) the end of the subtitle. Formats are in **Hour:Minutes:Seconds,Milliseconds**.

At Captiz, we often use .srt formats to deliver subtitles to our customers. You can open an .srt with a simple text editor.

Here is what it would look like:

```
1
00:00:15,000 --> 00:00:17,951
Hello, this is Team Captiz.

2
00:00:18,166 --> 00:00:20,083
We're very happy to have you onboard.

3
00:00:20,119 --> 00:00:21,962
Enjoy your Captiz experience!
```

> The number = the number of the subtitle
> Time = where subtitle appears /disappear on the screen
> The subtitle text = the only text that will show on screen, 1 or 2 lines.
> A blank space = to show the start of a new subtitle.

To summarize, **subtitling** is adapting content from audio to a written text, between a TC In and TC out. A subtitle displays a number of lines, and a number of characters per line.

Subtitles are usually **shown at the bottom of the screen**.

## What is a video translation?

**Translation** is an exercise intended to adapt a content from one language to another. Translations for videos, in the form of subtitles, must translate the meaning and not be literal. Please analyze the context, avoid the "calque" from one language to another, search for words you do not know and for accuracy for technical translation (eg: medical translation) and proof-read onc

## How are subtitles made?

The **subtitle artist** writes the content between timecodes. He/She should use **the following guidelines:**

<span style="color:orange">**SUBTITLING GUIDELINES**</span>

- Each subtitle should be written in **1 or 2 lines** (**never more**).

- Subtitles should be short and **concise**. For long sentences, it is better to create several short subtitles.

- The number of **CPS** (Character per seconds) is important for the comfort of the viewer (the human eye cannot easily read + watch the video when the number of CPS is above 20).
**CPS should be under 20.**

However, CPS between 20 and 25 are accepted for a maximum of 5% of your document. You might reduce CPS by removing padding words if necessary.

- **CPL (**Character per line): Please try keeping **CPL under 37 characters.**
If a subtitle is less than 37 characters, it should be fitted under only one line. If a subtitle is 38 or 39 with punctuation, you can write a single line too.
If it is difficult to respect this rule, we can accept a **CPL up to 50 for 5% of the document.**

**(INAUDIBLE):**

This applies for all transcription, even the edited ones.

Use (INAUDIBLE) if there is an audio that you cannot understand (eg: because of an accent).

*Eg:*      (INAUDIBLE)

If the sound is inaudible because of another sound effect (noise, etc…), please write the source of the noise:  (CROWD MURMURING)

**Dialogues:**

Use the hyphen for dialogues. One hyphen per line. Two hyphens maximum per subtitle. DO NOT include a blank space after the hyphen in english. (*When writing in another language, follow the language punctuation rules.)*

Each person speaking should have its own hyphen.

*Eg:*      -What did you think about the movie?

          -I absolutely loved it!

For hard of hearing transcription - and only when requested, include the name of the person:

*Eg:*      [John] What did you say?

          [Mary] I told him it was great!

In the event of a speaker interrupted by another one who finishes the sentence, you should convey it by double hyphens or a single long dash –.

**Bold:**

**Bold** is not permitted in subtitling.

**Underline:**

Underlining is not permitted in subtitling.

**- *Italics*:**

Use *Italics* for off-screen (off-camera) narration (when the sound comes from a source that is not shown on camera). For example, a speaker can be heard, but he / she does not appear on the video.

**[SOUND EFFECTS] - only for verbatim transcription:**

Square brackets are used to notify that there are sound effects and / or sound descriptions.

*Eg*: [LOUD MUSIC]

**Segmentation (or line breaks):**

Segmentation is the art of separating subtitles between them, or separating two lines within the same subtitle. Subtitle lines should end at **natural linguistic breaks**, and follow these rules:

- Avoid ending a sentence and starting another one on the same line (except for short sentences).

- End subtitles lines at a natural linguistic breaks

- Use a separate subtitle for every sentence if possible, or several subtitles for the same sentence (if sentence is too long).

**Do not break a line between:**

**Pronouns and verbs:**

Mom said I could have gone to the movies, however I did not have enough money.

Mom said I could have gone to the movies, however I did not have enough money.

**Articles and their nouns:**

He said it would increase the number of shareholders.

He said it would increase the number of shareholders

**A person's full name:**

Bob and Susan Miller are at the theatre.

Bob and Susan Miller are at the theatre.

**Conjunctions / Preposition and the following sentence:**

This table is delivered in several parts.

This table is delivered in several parts.

**A complex verbs' parts:**

<span style="color:red">If you came, you would have enjoyed the party.</span>   <span style="color:green">If you came, you would have enjoyed the party.</span>

**Capital letters:**

Please respect the general rules for the language.

*Eg:* In English, please use capital letters for pronoun **I**, for proper nouns (Names of people, brands, cities...), and at the beginning of every sentence.

*Eg:*   <span style="color:red">when i ride my bike in london, i usually see big ben.</span>

<span style="color:green">When I ride my bike in London, I usually see Big Ben.</span>

**Punctuation:**

Please use punctuation according to the languages' rules. Use the punctuation you would use if you were writing an article or a regular text.

Please use straight apostrophes, not curved apostrophes (Eg: <span style="color:green">Don't</span> worry about a thing. But <span style="color:red">don't</span> use this.)

Do not add space if a subtitle line finishes with a colon, semi-colon, comma or full-stop because the space will show in the subtitle display.

You do not need to add a coma at the end of several subtitles forming a sentence if the person speaks in a natural flow.

*Eg:*   <span style="color:red">1 I knew,</span>

<span style="color:red">2 that she would go there,</span>

<span style="color:red">3 on purpose.</span>

<span style="color:green">1 I knew</span>

<span style="color:green">2 that she would go there</span>

<span style="color:green">3 on purpose.</span>

**Grammar:**

Please pay attention to the grammar, and use correct tenses for verbs.

*Eg:*   <span style="color:red">If she had learnt her lessons, she would not fail.</span>

<span style="color:green">If she had learnt her lessons, she would not have failed.</span>

Moreover, be careful with agreement of subject and verb (eg: he make -> he makes), and changes that might occur with punctuation (changes for questions, or exclamations).

**Spelling:**

If you are unsure, please use a search engine (google, yahoo…) or a dictionary to search for proper spelling. Be careful with common mistakes regarding pronouns (Eg: i am -> I am) and contractions that can totally distort the meaning of the sentence (Eg: Your vs You're).

**Numerals:**

Numbers are written using numerals: He wrote 10 subtitles in 1 minute.

In some specific cases, numeric expressions should be written using letters:

We've told them 1000s of times!

We've told them thousands of times!

If a sentence starts with a number, use letters instead of numerals.

2 birds were singing.

Two birds were singing.

Use numerals added to the lowercase "th", "st" or "nd" when a day of the month is mentioned by itself without referring the month.

*E.g.* Mary went skiing on the 9th.

**Hyphenation:**

Hyphenation refers to the act of splitting a word in different subtitles / subtitle lines. But it is not allowed.

(Eg: This was a good repre-     This was a good)
    sentation              representation

**Phonetic words:**

If a word is spoken phonetically, you must caption it the way it is usually written.

*Eg:* If you hear "www dot D-C-M-P dot org" please transcribe "www.dcmp.org".

The same rule applies for numbers.

*Eg:* "eight or nine hundred" -> "800 or 900".