



KHACHKAR STUDIOS
EMPOWERING GOOD NEWS

I-SROI MEMO: SUBTITLING BEST AND WORST PRACTICES IN BFBF VIDEOS

Date: May 15, 2026

Objective: Assess how subtitle practices affect accessibility, audience reach, engagement, and overall social value of BFBF video content.

Best Practices (High I-SROI)

1. Accuracy and clarity

Well-transcribed, error-free subtitles ensure comprehension, especially for non-native speakers and hearing-impaired audiences. This directly increases knowledge transfer—core to impact.

2. Multilingual subtitles

Providing subtitles in key audience languages expands reach beyond primary viewers. This significantly improves inclusivity and cross-border dissemination, raising social return per video.

3. Proper timing and readability

Subtitles synced with speech, with appropriate reading speed and segmentation, reduce cognitive load and viewer drop-off. This improves retention and message absorption.

4. Consistent formatting

Standardized font, size, contrast, and positioning (e.g., avoiding overlap with visuals) enhance usability across devices, increasing effective audience engagement.

5. Context-sensitive subtitling

Capturing tone, speaker identification, and relevant non-verbal cues (e.g., [music], [applause]) improves narrative clarity and accessibility, especially in storytelling formats.

Worst Practices (Low / Negative I-SROI)

1. Inaccurate or auto-generated subtitles without review

Errors distort meaning, reduce credibility, and can lead to misinformation—undermining the intended impact.

2. Monolingual subtitling only

Limits accessibility and excludes key stakeholder groups, reducing potential reach and social value.

3. Poor synchronization

Delays or mismatches between audio and text frustrate users and increase drop-off rates, lowering engagement metrics.

4. Overcrowded or fast subtitles

Excessive text or high reading speed reduces comprehension, particularly for older audiences or non-native speakers.

5. Inconsistent or obstructive placement

Subtitles covering key visuals or varying in style create distraction and reduce content effectiveness.

High-quality subtitling is a low-cost, high-impact intervention. It increases accessibility, extends audience reach, and improves content retention—thereby amplifying the social return on each video produced. Conversely, poor subtitling not only wastes resources but can actively diminish impact and credibility.